

DUST AND ASHES

DUST AND ASHES

A. C. Stewart

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1897
T. C. C. C.

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up Peggy with
my best wishes ..
Ood affection

June 4th 1924

C. B. Lewis

DUST AND ASHES

(Chiefly)



The culmination of his heart's contrition. -
A little lonely grave.

See page 2

Dust and Ashes

(Chiefly)

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By

A. C. Stewart



Published by the Author

"Sumptus et meo periculo"

1910

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PREFATORY NOTE

A PREFACE is usually either a palliation or an explanation—an attempt to excuse errors either generic or voluntary, or an elucidation of the aims and theories imperfectly propounded in the text—procedures very wearisome to the reader and useless in the end. The author then, in this note, does not try, much less expect, to disarm the critic, conciliate the reader, or calm the ebullitions of the philosophic soul, weary of the crudities, obscurities, and villainous diction of twentieth century rhyme, being thoroughly assured from of old that whether as a conspirator or a poet, death is the verdict. If guiltless of treason then “kill him for his bad verses”—a process doubtless soothing to the slayers, but seriously objected to by the rhymers, who however lacking in spirituality, must have at least sufficient substance to feel the pangs of dissolution. For the guidance of those who would slay the soul, the author intimates that he has long been familiar with many forms of mental terrors. *Politicians* without honor, *Physicians* without skill, *Lawyers* without sense, and men and women, too, without virtue. To the killers of the body he may say modestly that he has faced death often and again by explosion, wreck, and flood, so they may take it for granted that, like Banquo’s ghost, he “will not down.”

But leaving the cynicism of arid years aside, I seize this opportunity, in good honest prose, to give my heart-

PREFACE

felt thanks to the friendly critics of earlier days who predicted for me that which (I hope) they may now see (partially at least) fulfilled.

If I have not followed always the paths they pointed for me, it is my regret more than theirs. If subjects commonly tabooed have occasionally employed an errant pen, I hope that they will find in the last analysis that the poet has nowhere stooped to defend a vice either in nature or art. To my many other (not critical) friends (the solid and incorruptible), who have stood like adamant, unchanging in the seething welter of a commercial age, I in this volume (which is published principally for them) subscribe my deep and enduring love.

To them in many a sombre hour I have turned for hope and assistance, and have never yet found them wanting in the love and virtue which

"Make men and nations great."

In their sound morality the man has ever found sympathy and the poet hope. To you, then, may this volume be a memento of my fealty, admiration and devotion, then whether it be "immortal for a few years," or the "merest noth that flutters," it will at least have served the end that is the most to be desired by human sanity

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DUST AND ASHES

(CHIEFLY)

MOONLIGHT ON THE CANADIAN PRAIRIE

The long cool twilight of the northern prairie
Completes a day in June,
And slowly up, diaphanous and airy,
Glides the translucent moon

Star-couriers vanish up the vault transcendent,
Pale heralds of her flight,
While she arises tranquil and resplendent,
Calm Empress of the night

Garbed in her robes of glories evanescent,
Girt with a silver zone,
Pellucid, golden, radiant, iridescent,
Unrivalled and alone

Say, Sovereign, from thine altitude immortal,
What realms dost thou survey?
When sweep the curtains of the midnight's portal
Before thy beams away?

Does Isolation on the Plains potential
Exhale a sigh of peace,
Conscious the reflex of thy light essential
Illumes his natal seas?

Ah' yes, sweet Sorceress, in thy mystic gloaming
Space cannot hold us slaves,
And Fancy sees the tide sweep landward foaming,
In multiplying waves.

The hoar crests curled in heaving ebullitions,
Sinking with sob profound,
Engulphed and lost in endless repetitions
Of motion, hue and sound

Thro' thy mazed meshes pearl'd and opalescent,
Soft throated as a dove,
Sweet Passion's lyrics, mellow'd, liquescent,
Thrill with young, mutual love

Brooks limpid, gleaming songsters, flowered meadows
Restore the summer chimes,
And grey cathedrals fill thy fluent shadows
With low, far verban chimes.

Lilies and heather, trefoil, ardent roses
Bloom in thy fecund rays,
Till the rapt dreamer's mental eye discloses
The land of other days.

One gazer sees his Tyrolean mountains
Loom thro' thy golden beams,
And quaffs the nectar of their glacial fountains,
Tho' only in his dreams

*

And one grief-wrung with tear-dimmed vision,
Sees thro' thy reflux wave
The culmination of his heart's contrition,—
A little lonely grave

A tear-dew'd mound that hides a fairer blossom
Than blooms upon its sod,
The one lov'd daughter of this mourning bosom
Gone early home to God

Thou prescient Queen of Youth's abandoned Palace,
What scenes dost thou unroll?
Filling with memory's wine conception's chalice,
Dew of the arid soul

Or calling forth from drear, uncharted regions,
With cold remorseless truth,
Obsessions and transgressions ranked in legions
Of our misguided youth

Pale Monitress of sad-eyed Introspection,
Close Confidante of Grief,
Thou whom the victims of young indirection
Solicit for relief

Dare a lone wanderer beg a magic nectar
From these thy dew's compress'd,
To exorcise the reminiscent spectre
That haunts his mourning breast.

Or is thy mission punishment, not pardon,
That thy revealing ray
Illumes the glories of the haunted garden
Where Passion fell astray?

Sad fancy, drifting thro' a thousand mazes,
Beneath thy procreant beams,
Loses herself amid the sombre hazes
Of dark, elusive dreams.

But breaking forth she starts as from a vision,
As thou break'st thro' a cloud,
And sees thee sweeping on thy course elysian,
Unsullied, splendid, proud.

Yet dim-eyed, charmed with thy profound effulgence,
Steep'd in the emerald night,
The dreamer lingers in a wrapt indulgence,
Companion of thy flight

Hail, Empress of the Midnight realms so pernal
Queen of the Lunar Vale!
Majestic, chaste, immaculate, eternal,
Hail, Sovereign Goddess, Hail!

LINES TO A YOUNG ARTIST

It is not worth your while
To mourn tho' fortune brings her favors late,
Let her upon ephemeral triumphs smile,
You can afford to wait
A thousand famous puppets come and go,
Leaving no mark, then why should genius grow
Impatient at her fate?

'Twere well, indeed, if Worth
Crown'd with her laurel might discard the dread
Of sinking nameless to untrophied earth
With unrecorded dead.
But 'tis not in a day that earth can pass
Her judgment twixt the hero and the ass,
Time clears her foolish head

Then trouble thou no more,
Let summer fools intoxicate the crowd
And cull exotics from a southern shore,
And cry their wares aloud
When autumn comes these alien growths will fail,
While the strong native will defy the gale,
And eke the frozen cloud

What after all is fame?
A fragile poise above the common height,
A doubtful glory and disputed claim,
A dream—no more—of light.
It has no power with the giant Time,
Who sinks the bard and his ambitious rhyme
I' th' inevitable night

Then can you tell me why
A human thing should shrink his lease with tears,
To leave a hieroglyphic 'neath the sky
To puzzle future years
Or tempt the nearer ghouls to ope the grave,
With tape and square to mete the empty cave
And staring eyeless spheres?

Gaze on the great of old;
The mightiest sleep in silence cold and drear,
Swept meteor-like across a sea of gold, ~
What is there left to fear?
Why should we fret and irritate this clay,
Which clothes conception for a trivial day
In limitations here?

Oh, let us laugh!
A tadpole is the nadir of a god
Divinity athirst can long to quaff
 From its paternal sod
The oozing drip where spawning monsters breed
In loathsome ecstasy their jellied seed,
 At copulation's nod.

Let the old world roll on
And fossilize the scientific brain,
To tell the future of the ages gone
 When mankind held its reign
Its convolutions traced the god will say,
Here were combined divinity and clay
 In evolution's chain

Then in a world of gods
Pride may reject its womb of blood and toil,
Disclaiming its connection with the clods
 Germes from the sun and soil
Then from the zenith to its humble source
Time shall resolve each elemental force,
 Till apes all potent smile

Pause thou and look at these,
Then on the burning sun and cindered moon,
Then lean a moment over Time's abyss,
 What is ambition's croon?
It has no fitness nor coherence here,
And fame, the hauble, toss it to the air
 To burst and vanish soon

*TO ANDREW McMILLAN**ON THE DEATH OF HIS BROTHER*

Weep not for his untimely doom,
Released from earth's corroding toil,
How happy falling in his bloom,
Safe on his native soil'

A boon the Exile begs in vain,
He, doomed a wanderer to rove,
Resigning for a foreign man
His mother-land of love

How blest our souls could you and I
Be sure at last our dust to lay
Beneath the emerald island's sky,
Wrapped in our natal clay!

Oh Erin, dear! thy children gay,
Though scarred like veterans with the years,
Thy magic name still melts, and they
Look back to thee through tears.

Oh! may that love still wield control,
Whatever else may be their fate,
That love commanding in the soul
Makes men and nations great

For him who early bloomed and died,
He sleeps beside the murmuring rill,
Where friends may linger by his side
And sorrow weep her fill

The while that jocund birds will sing
As 'twere to show that grief is wrong,
And glad reproof the skylark bring
In early morning song.

Yea, Nature's language is her own,
Ambition spurns her gentle sway,
And earth, so artificial grown,
Has cast her truths away

'Tis by the grave that mankind feel
The empty aims of human strife,
Ah, there no sophist can conceal
The brevity of life'

He mourned a sister passed away,
As he has done in early bloom,
Nor knew how quickly death should lay
Him by her silent tomb

For us, his mourners, who essay
To weave a garland for his grave,
We, too, shall shortly sink away
'Neath Time's advancing wave.

And for the future, hid in dust,
Hope gild our swift-contracting span,
And teach us still to place our trust
In God, who knoweth man

TO THE DIPLOMATISTS AND AMBASSADORS

WHO
 CREATE ANNIHILATE
 AND RE-CREATE
 FOSTER AND DESTROY
 THE POLITICAL PREDILECTIONS OF MEN AND NATIONS

Ye Diplomats! to whom our little world
 Is but a toy to amuse your leisure hours,
 What next new cult are we to see unfurled?
 What "grouping of the Powers?"

What new "Alliance," "Treaty," "Isim" or "League,"
 Shall we be called to-morrow to endorse?
 Still, if you say so, we'll defy fatigue,
 Applauding till we're hoarse.

I'll do my best, and since I find it hard
 To keep on your gyrations proper tab,
 I'll list our present Allies on a card
 Marked—Union—not a scab

I find myself propounding things absurd
 Are we on speaking terms with "Bill" to-day?
 Oh, no! I find we are "profoundly stirred,"
 O'er what?—I cannot say

With the Mikado there I breathe relief,
 "Offensive and Defensive," sound and firm,
 But is not their "exclusiveness" a grief?
 To use no harsher term.

■

With "China—our relations"?—pardon pray,
Astray again,—to hold his goods secure
We make him do it in the Chinese way
Keep wide the "Open Door"

With Italy I know not where we're at,
Please post me ere I make some awkward slips,
I hope we're "friendly," for they tell me that
She has some corking ships.

And "Abdul Hamid," when I come to you,
Against the Czar, we're yours, of that I'm sure,
But there's your "Ancient claim on Egypt" too,
Confound it! what a bore?

Poor Nicholas, you're desperate and at bay,
Your throne and crown are played at pitch-and-toss,
We've no "affection" to be thrown away,
We'll wait and see who's boss.

Towards your Alphonso, debonair and gay,
We've changed our creed and given you of our Queens,
"Our attitude is altered" since the day
Sam swiped the "Philippines."

With Uncle Sammy I am more at ease
His "genial eccentricities" we hail,
And with a "charitable grin" of "Peace,"
We let him twist our tail

With him it must be Peace and Amity,
Altho' at times we suffer nervous shock
But "Anglo-Saxondom" exclaims "Well, damn it, he
'S a chip of the old Block!"

With France, well really, I like Jean Crapeau,
But what's our "standing," since the eastern squall;
And he stood "neutral" from our Ally's foe,
 'Intente Cordiale?'

That's French, and means a million bayonets,
Reflects towards William "calming thoughts of Peace,"
When in his dreams the restless War-Lord threatens
 To walk upon our seas.

Of Austria I am dubious, Heaven knows;
We may be "friends or enemies,"—explain
But since we've bought her oft, I may suppose
 She'll sell herself again

Please, ye Diplomatsists—if 'twere no harm,
I beg you post me so that I can play,
And list our running mates in racing form,
 "Selections for to-day."

THE LOST ONES

*("AND SHE BEING DESOLATE SHALL SIT UPON
THE GROUND")*

Are you an axiom for the staid Divine,
Example apt of misery and death,
Prospective tenant of the sulphurous mine,
Where wait the doomed ones of Jehovah's wrath?
Poor lost ones of the meteor-like career,
Your present pitiful, your future fear

Are you for politicians but a blot
On the fair fame of city and of town,
A growth obnoxious, cankered with the rot,
A thing to be suppressed and batted down,
A loathsome sorceress with damning art,
With poisoned soul and an adulterous heart?

Are you for the philosopher a phase
Of Nature casting off her effete dross,
A fertilizer of the unborn days,
A mere excrescence taken in the gross,
A noxious weed among a thousand flowers,
Doomed to destruction in a few short hours?

Are you for vicious forty refuge sane,
From marital felicities grown sere,
Deeming maternity's autumnal wane
Full license for a libertine's career?
Forgot the youthful glories and grey hairs
Of her who bore his honors and his heirs

Are you for married dames a vicious snare,
A shoal to wreck domestic argosies,
A perfumed lure, fidelity's despair,
The stormy petrel of conjugal seas,
A painted vice for all mankind to shun,
Half pitied, hated, envied, when all's done?

Are you for thoughtless youth a present need,
A secret solace, hidden and adored,
A witch whose smile has shattered many a creed,
A queen on whom to spend the pater's board,
A rollicking companion for the night,
Hid like a leper from his sister's sight?

Are you for youthful maids a gilded crime,
A world's epitome of dress and shame,
A rose polluted with the serpent's slime,
Whose outward grace redeems the inward blame,
A luring wonder, fascinating fire,
Climax of adolescence's mad desire?

Are you for the physician bloodless wraith
Of man's decadence, sowing far and wide
Disease, despair, insanity and death
Promotress dread of racial suicide,
Generic ruin of the heart and mind,
The vitalized damnation of mankind?

What you may be to these I do not know,
To me you are a mystery profound,
Your mother spotless as unsullied snow,
Your sire clean, abstemious, and sound.
Yet you, the offspring, have a heart of fire,
An all-embracing, limitless desire.

The method of your fall is some excuse,
Rude, crude, betrayal by concupiscence,
Yet your concession aided his abuse,
Your acquiescence is the thief's defence,
Accessory to the act, you cannot claim
Man single, sole creator of your shame

There is no 'ology that fits your case,
Lucretia fills us less with love than awe;
More famed than colder matrons of their race
Are sweet Aspasia, gay Cleopatra,
By premature senility deplored,
By passion's proselytes admired, adored.

Poor souls, the evil brilliance of your life
May well confound the casuist and seer,
Wring the lone heart of the neglected wife,
And fill the young with emulating fear
Religion pales and in you only sees
Unbridled license, limitless disease

Poor moths, I've seen you flaunt in many lands,
Gorgeous, admired, desolately gay,
Your cold hearts crushed to death in colder hands,
Your finery swept like autumn leaves away,
Years which have made the mother one adored,
Make you a wreck, detested and abhorred.

Swept from your orbit, an uncharted sphere,
Your wealth potential of sweet motherhood
To Moloch sacrificed—a barren ear,
On whose succession spring will never brood,
Plunging at last your suicidal head
In Seine, the Thames, the Hudson, or the Red.

But these are merely physical, your why
And wherefore are insoluble to me,
As yet no gleam athwart abstraction's sky
Illumes the midnight of your mystery
None than yourselves know better that your path
Ends in the gulf of grief, disease, and death

Whether you are a creature of our laws,
A protest against arbitrary rules
A mere effect or a compelling cause
Towards a new revision of old schools,
Perhaps some Burbank's ethical pursuit
May make this moral cactus yield a fruit.



Looking at West coast so cida - hean
 1. Scene On The - the Hudson - or the Red

God! for a clean, sane world in wisdom clad,
Seized of the deepest interests of mankind,
In this raw adolescence, amorous, mad,
Shatters the social code or wrecks its mind,
Or vice-envenomed, leaves a nerveless spawn
For woes and early death to gorge upon

Our prescience, wandering in conception's haze,
Finds not the point where she would fain emerge,
Lost in conjecture, knows not if she strays
Far from her quest or on solution's verge,
And copying the world, we leave her here,
Pausing to dry an academic tear

*ON THE DROWNING OF A FRENCH-CANADIAN
LABORER*

IN THE JACQUES CARTIER RAPIDS, QUEBEC

He dropped from the boom like a stone,
And left a young widow to mourn,
But devil the tourist that reads by the light
He was helping to build when he went down in night,
Will accord to his spirit a groan

We are chaff, we are dust, we are dross,
We are eyesores, by God! to the great,
With our lives in our hand for a dollar a day
We build up the world and have nothing to say,
So what reck of a laborer's fate

*TO THE HIGH AND MIGHTY DISPENSERS OF
THE IMMORTALITY OF MORTALS*

*THIS POEM IS DEDICATED IN FEAR AND TREMBLING. BUT
WITH EXTREME FERVOR. BY THE AUTHOR*

Ye poor, o'er labored "Sons of God,"
And "Joint-Heirs" of high heaven,
Dare I asperse your mantle broad
And hope to be forgiven?
Alas, I fear the bard who dares
Expose your flaws and follies,
You'll stigmatize as one who shares
Black Hell's infernal malice
By night and day!

You have evolved a huge combine,
A Heavenly "Corporation,"
So no collapse may hap decline
The markets of salvation
And should a bard unwary chance
To say a truth discourteous,
His price immortal might advance
Beyond his power of purchase
To buy this day.

Dare he assert you seek the sea,
Like annual sports careering,
Or to the mountains dove-like flee,
Where summer birds are pairing.

While far the "Godless sinners" sweat
To earn your pleasures' prices,
Stark toiling in the sweltering heat,
While you are sipping ices
That sultry day.

"Most reverend" modest gents, I fear
To print the plain conception,
Your self-denying counsels are
A fraudulent deception
For when the work's at hand you roam
In search of recreations,
Yet fly to crown the "Harvest Home"
With praises and laudations
Thanksgiving Day

The juicy and corporeal joys
That centre in a turkey
Can hush the Psalmist's holy voice
And make the heavens murky
And when it smokes upon the board,
With shanks would grace a porter,
You never fail to thank the Lord,
But cut the grace some shorter
That plenteous day

It charms the heart when winter blows
To see you brisk and hearty,
So genial laudable, profuse,
At social tea, and party

Returning thanks for Heaven's good,
And pitying the follies
Of "Want's improvidential brood,"
"The poor are with you always"
"Even to this day.

Paternal Shepherd of the Fold,
The family circle's Mentor,
The guide thro' mazy ways untold,
Of crime the great Preventer
Preceptor of the erring son,
Of daughters gay the patron,
The comfort of the widowed one
And anchor of the matron
By night and day

Oh, who so well can vice excuse
Or who so strong condemn it?
Who readier grasps the trimmer's ruse
To praise it or to blame it?
Your training theological
Has made yourselves beheve it
That you can twist it with your skill,
To be what you would have it
To seem this day

Oh, sirs, you well may vice excuse,
'T has done you noble duty,
In laundered shirts and polished shoes
And sable coats to suit ye

Should it thro' rude misfortune die,
You'd doff your broadcloth breeches,
And lay your looks majestic by
And fall to digging ditches,
Or starve some day.

'Tis long you looked upon mankind
A prey both right and lawful,
A mine where you could dollars find,
A butt for threats most awful.
Come, "Reverend Sirs," the day does break,
The world is not so dormant,
As yield you of its best and take
Its payment back in torment
For timeless day.

MACKAY'S FAREWELL TO LAW

To the tumid tome, to the iterant phrase,
To precedent and fad,
To the drowsing domes, to the mental haze,
Where common sense goes mad;
To the vacant frown, to the nodding judge,
To the grind of the legal hell,
To the silken gown, to the slush and fudge,
MacKay bids his farewell.

Farewell to the thrall of the rigid cult,
To the bound, unwitting slave,
To the soulless toil devoid result,
To each subscribing knave,

To the fettered fool, to the blustering ape,
 To the dark, chaotic course,
 I thank the gods for my escape,
 Good-bye without remorse.

To the victim bled and flung to rot
 On the dunghill, rank, of time,
 To the cunning, warp'd, conniving sot
 Who wrests success from crime,
 To the barren waste of the clashing dubs,
 To the sophistry and guff,
 To the rff of the intellectual scrubs,
 MacKay has had enough.

Farewell, 'Your Worship,' and 'My Lord'—
 The Ass,—viz. "Learned Friend";
 To 'ritual,' 'rote,' and 'written word,'
 Imposture without end.
 To the "Groove," the "Rut," the deadening form,
 Stagnation, chaos, blight,—
 To the fetid corse, to the writhing worm,
 MacKay bids you "Good-night."

To the foul inversion of the Truth,
 Veiled, stultified and shammed, -
 To the "Righteous Equity," forsooth,
 To the process endless, damned, -
 To the tortuous mode, to the senile style,
 To the everlasting jaw,
 To all the rank accretions vile, -
 In fine—Farewell to Law!

Hail, and all hail, and once more hail!
Clear erudition's stream,
That flows thro' Contemplation's vale,
Reflecting Wisdom's beam,
And where the mind's perennial flowers
Bloom on the mystic sod,
And Time links out his golden hours
To bind the soul to God

Hail, pleasant valley of the soul!
Where Peace and Virtue dwell,
And Love cons from Contentment's scroll—
"Repose ye, all is well"
Sweet haunt of all the deathless minds,
Orbs of the immortal sky,
Your perfumed meads and wooing winds
Are henceforth for MacKay

POSTSCRIPT

With a tear or two for the prisoned sane,
For the current-swept a cry;
With mild contempt for the pompous vain,
For the Aimless Lost a sigh.
To the yokel gowned, to the nifty snide,
To the bull, and bear and bore;
To the thug, the smug, the putrid pride,
Farewell for evermore!

*TO AN AGED WOMAN TELLING HER BEADS**PART II—AFTER THREE YEARS*

Years have swept across the earth
Since I saw thee lone and old,
Kneeling prostrate in the dearth
Of thy feelings, dull and cold

Then I saw thee, silver haired,
Bowed in supplication low
Still thou art with sorrow spared
Death's uplifted final blow

Who had deemed that such as thee,
Older than th' allotted years,
Palsied thus had'st lived to see
Youth and beauty fade in tears?

Life would seem a gambler's stake,
Poised upon a single throw
The merest accident will make
It dust or ashes—even so

When I saw thee in my youth,
I in part had hoped to find
In thy life a gleam of truth,
Something to illumine the mind.

Then the young conception thought
She could divinate the years,
And, with wild assumption fraught,
Dared to analyze thy tears.

She has been unlearned to say
Things there are beyond her ken,
Who, constructed from the clay,
Knows the mysteries of men?

All is dark and vain and drear
In the moonlight's misty realms.
Shadows rise and disappear
With a speed that overwhelms.

In the wandering vagrant wind,
Voices weird and wild we hear,
Startled—pale—we glance behind
In search of some substantial fear

And these shadows rip the soul
Till we gag with anguish vile
The o'erstrung heart, beyond control,
Bursts and they vanish for awhile.

Thus it is these things of air,
In such measure make us feel,
We, in phantom-bred despair,
Lose the sense of what is real

These, perhaps, are dreaming words;
But who hath found in busy things,
In actions, speech, or crimson swords,
An end which confirmation brings.

Is not victory over aught
Reckless when or where it come?
Cloth'd with insatiable thought,
Answer, victors—are ye dumb?

When we near our latest sun,
See (but not beyond) our fate,
When the war of life is done,
What do conquests aggregate?

Is there then a spirit proud,
Tho' its genius were divine,
A moment pausing from its shroud,
Can say that this or this is mine?

We laugh and flout as clay and stone
The calm, materialistic slave,
He, I with sophisms have o'erthrown,
But oh, the unanswerable grave!

Woman, kneeling at thy feet,
Tell me, are my verses just?
Must this heart that scorns its beat
Sink again to vulgar dust?

Oh, thou damning clay again,
We were not correctly made,
For thou lingerest in the brain,
And by thee we are betrayed!

We appoint ourselves in life
Stations where our souls may fret;
Laborious, intellectual, strife,
Discharge the universal debt

Mutable, alas, we are!
Adieu! I'll come some future time
I'm weary of this shooting star,
And, for the present, sick of rhyme.

PART III AFTER SIX YEARS

Years again have winged their flight,
And once more to thee I come,
Pausing in the fading light,
Looking on thy silent tomb

Silent, yea, and starr'd with snow,
In this city of the dead
Thou, who wert in life so low,
Liest where the great are laid.

Far more fitting hast thou lain
In some quiet country nook,
Where the awestruck rustic swain
Stops in solitude to look.

Hidden in the grassy sward,
Where no trimming slaves intrude,
There could build the fitting bird,
And rear her inoffensive brood.

Under quiet country skies,
Near the laughing limpid rill,
Where the jocund robin flies
And the mourner pipes his fill

Folly all!—the summer warm,
Or when wintry tempests rave,
Mighty Nature has no charm
For the tenant of the grave.

Back to patient Mother Earth
Comes the proud and lowly clay,
No more jests of wealth and worth,
All distinctions swept away.

Yes, the jest of wealth remains,
Marble shaft and granite scroll'd,
Guarded round by rusting chains
Speak the potency of gold.

Moments cure the heart that bleeds,
Days will tutor grief to play,
Years will choke the flowers with weeds,
Time will eat the shaft away

Darkly falls the autumn gloom.
Early flakes and laggard leaves
O'er thy straight and narrow tomb,
Brooding dark, her curtain weaves.

Oh! is this the final all,
This the guerdon of the seers,
Who have toiled within the thrall
Of a faith six thousand years?

They are silent in the soil,
Answer have they none to give,
Man must—baffled—fain recoil
On that commonplace to live

Live until his latest sun
Sinks within the shadowed west,
Then, his wild contentions done,
Lapsing like the waves to rest.

Reckless then of what hath chanced,
Passion, Epoch, Woe and Date,
No more blindly hurled against
The infinitudes of Fate.

Muse and ponder as we can;
Reason, trust, believe, and rave,
Nothing else to baffled man
Keeps its secret like the grave

Here the scientist at last
Moulders with the unschooled clown,
And religion with his dust
Lays his faith in silence down

True, the living weep and say
We shall meet again -but where?
Death, that tyrant of our clay,
Points with icy finger, -there.

Time shall vindicate mankind,
We shall not have lived in vain,
Of the monuments of mind
Surely some will aye remain

I will smile and say I trust;
Oh! thou moaning autumn night,
Thou dost chill me, and I must
Seek some shelter, fire, and light

THE FIRST TRAGEDY

THE EVOLUTION OF A LOVE

Farewell!

I leave thee now and to return no more,
And thou shalt wed.
Children shall play and gambol round thy door,
Love shall accord to thee from her rich store
Joys, when my head
Burns wild with fever or lies cold and dead
Farewell!

Farewell!

The brilliant hours in which we loved are flown,
The night is here.

Forth in the darkness I must stray alone,
The wild winds circle up, their distant moan
Breaks on my ear

Careless I meet them, I have done with fear,
Farewell!

Farewell!

"Peace to thy breast," is and shall be my prayer,
Thou all of mine

No other maid, it matters not how fair,
Shall ever be what thou hast been, nor share
This heart—'tis thine

I breathe earth's misery in this single line,
Farewell!

Farewell!

The glimpses sweet of heaven, the glorious days,
The leafy grove,

The peering through the twilight's purple haze
To catch the outline of that form whose praise
Exceeds my love.

'Tis past—no more entranced shall we rove,
Farewell!

Farewell!

The violet-sprinkled grove, the silver rill
Weeping its way

Beneath the shadow of the Birchen Hill,
Where piped at eve the plaintive whelp poor will,
While died the day

The perfume, music, verdure, can decay,
Farewell!

Farewell!

Oh, stubborn heart, why still refuse to break
And be no more,
When through the creeping midnight thou must ache,
Or rend in dreams, or with the morn awake
But to deplore,
Thy pangs still crowding as the waves ashore?
Farewell!

Farewell!

Come, Death, and let me look upon thy face
And clasp thy hand.
Thy marble smile betrays to me a grace
That makes a refuge of thy dwelling-place,
And thy touch bland.
Come, Death, and lead me to thy silent land
Farewell!

AFTER TWENTY YEARS

I deemed you were from heaven,
So green I could not know
That nought divine is given
To mortals here below,
But now with morals shattered,
With ideals swept away,
With time and tempest battered,
I know you merely clay.

And if you married wisely,
Ignoring all the past,
And learn to live precisely,
Safe from dishonor's blast,

'Tis well the past why perish?—
And reconciled to God,
Pray that no child you nourish
Treads where her mother trod.

To me you were angelic,
A new thing 'neath the sun,
A loved and sacred relic,
To guard till life was done
But fate swept us asunder,
And thus is where we are,
You're posing with him yonder,
I here suppose with her

She has not half your graces,
No—not the married one,—
But this sweet maid whose face is
Her fortune sole and lone
In some things you resemble,
In love she's never loath,
And she too can dissemble,
And women bore you both.

Her charms are mostly human,
To speak her perfect praise
She's just the sort of woman
That suits my sober days
With smiles and swift obstructions,
Vivacious to the life,
With all the sweet seductions
Detested in a wife.

A charming little flower
Neat, sweet, demure and gay,
Clothed in the guise and power,
To sweep black care away
And really I'm not jesting,
With just sufficient past
To make her interesting
And yield a piquant taste.

I won't say I adore her,
Tho' she is very dear,
I've worshipped some before her,
And she has loved her share,
A mutual understanding,
Sans writ or verbal bond,
To-day in pleasure spending,
Why should we look beyond?

Her past is hers—and his too,
My past is mine,—and yours,
Thou past, oh grim Mephisto!
Thy canker never cures,
There's that profound in Nature
Which makes, when all is done,
The exclusive human creature,
Desire to be "The One"

She's sometimes very naughty,
She swears and drinks with zest,
Can wear an air quite haughty,
And crack a ribald jest

But bless her, she's no gossip,
Tho' fain to hear the news,
Her life has been a toss up,
And she abhors reviews.

I know I'll miss her sorely
When fortune bids us part,
But then 'twill add but merely
One fracture to my heart.
She'll grieve perhaps a fortnight,
A month perhaps I'll fret,
But oh, the parting passion,
Let us forget,—forget!

My course has been unstable
Since that transforming day
You snapped my moral cable
And let me drift away
Till then I had no notion,
But 'twas to woman due,
The pure and true devotion
With which I worshipped you.

'Twas not all your transgression,
'Twas not all my behest,
I begged a sweet concession,
You gladly acquiesced
The veil was rent asunder,
The light from Heaven died
In joy and woe and wonder
We crossed the great divide

Once more was re-enacted
The story of old time,
And grief long since exacted
The payment for our crime.
The futile tears and terror,
Rebellion against fate,
The coalescent horror,
The hearts left desolate.

The dark days that descended,
The keen and sleepless fears,
The anguish not quite ended,
The silent midnight tears
Farewell—alas! for ever,—
A new and sombre life,
You wed the first new lover,
I took a faithful wife.

Perhaps,—for vice will ever
Bequeath its residue,—
They sail'd some unknown river
Before they met us two,
The curse to us is given
We criminals who thief,
The truest thing 'neath heaven
We never can believe.

POSTSCRIPT AFTER TWENTY-FOUR YEARS

The tortuous path we followed,
Was it our own or fate's?
Our viciousness unhallowed,
Inherited or hate's?

Must we our young digressions,
That blossomed like the flower,
Condemn as vile obsessions
In age's colder hour?

I know not,—but this feature
Seems dominant on earth
In youth that Giant Nature
Omnipotent stands forth.
Time, the magician, dinges
Her dazzling apparel,
And life's, through all its changes,
One culminating moral.

When time has stamped the wrinkles,
When cheeks have lost their glow,
When grief with grey besprinkles
The jet of long ago,
When the proud poise is humble,
Preciseness disarranged,
When the firm footsteps stumble,
The point of view is changed.

Say, are we but the driftings
Of Time's remorseless breath?
Or the volcanic siftings
Of some gigantic death?
The atoms left from sweeping
Of some diviner sphere,
Whose pickle herring weeping
The immortals laugh to hear

I lose myself, co-sinner,—
In reveries and words,
Who skim the cream for dinner
Must sup on whey and curds,
But sophistry and ethics,
Religion, all are vain,
With the same bunch of tiffes,
Would we not love again?

I think so. God, His pardon!
Perhaps I may be wrong,
For chastity's sweet guerdon
I'd like to finish strong.
But Lord, I'm only forty,
Clean, sound and unsubdued,
At eighty, old and dirty,
Perhaps I may be good.

Pardon this batch of humors
From mine, an untrained mind,
Reflections grow like tumors,
And dangerous in their kind
Degenerate and bestial,
Fond critic, did you say?
Come, Mother Eve, it's up to you
To marshal me my way

But this I say as final,
Context of all the rest,
Time's mightiest moralists were they
Who played love's game the best

The bloodless prudes who blame us,
Whom beauty could not budge,
Have not the right to damn us,
And have no power to judge.

This is no plea for license,
Or universal lust,
None hold in more abhorrence
The fruitless lecher's dust
But if I had the power of Jove,
To clear, or to condemn,
The erring pair who pleaded love,
I'd pause and pardon them

TOASTS—PAST AND PRESENT

They have drunk to the swan like sweep
Of their barques with the snowy sails;
They have drunk to her rise and leap,
As she swung to the favoring gales.
—But I drink to the plated prow,
And the gaunt ribs sheathed with mail,
That shear their way thro' the ebb and flow,
I' the teeth of the fiercest gale.

They have drunk to the tapering mast
To the weird, wild, shrieking shroud,
They have sung their fame thro' the ages past, —
The swift, the strong, the proud

—But I drink to the blazing bowels,
And the fiends of the bunker's shades,
To the heart that echoes the tempest's howls
With the rip of its foaming blades.

They have drunk to the nimble lad
Who climbed as she dipped a lee,
And sung with the seaman's pride he had
As she heeled to the drifting sea
—But I drink to Satan's limb,
Who, down in his hell's weird glare,
Whirls in the coal with a savage hymn
To the roar of the burning air.

They have drunk to their Southern seas,
To the shores where spread the palm,
To the mild and tropic breeze,
To the soft and siren calm
But I drink to the salt wave where
The giant icebergs ride,
And the storm king leaps from his savage lair
Like a lover to his bride.

They have drunk to their country glades,
To their Thorn and Beech and Yew,
To their waiting dark-eyed maids,
With their tryst and troth so true
—But I drink to a village street,
And a woman dear as life,
To a bosom warm and a faith as sweet,
To my own, to my loyal wife.

Let them drink as they pose and choose,
Let them drink to the white sail's swirl,
Which lags them home as the wind it blows
To their fond, confiding girl.
—But I drink to the giant steam,
With its arm of a thousand tons,
That lifts me over the ocean home
To the mother of my sons.

TO IRA A MACKAY

WHO UNFORTUNATELY WAS A LAWYER

My prescient friend, what did you have to do
With the embittered conflicts of mankind?
The darkened counsel of the brawling crew,
Their logic crude, inconsequential, blind,
Vile circumventions, false subtleties,
Confusions endless, and base legal lies.

What is the mystery of your weary path,
Strewn with the wrecks of intellectual youth,
Clothed in the garb of paraphrastic death,
Its mummified conceptions of the truth?
Where Right and Wrong transform themselves at will,
Mere bloodless puppets of the vulpine skill.

Were it not better you had steered afar
From the wild maelstrom commonly called Law,
Whose modes, conveyances and actions are
Concentered all in its devouring maw?
The soulless monster of judicial art
That wrecks the fortune, peace of mind, and heart

To you, clear-souled, what were the brainless ones,
Whose intellectual obliquities
Discard the moral systems and their suns,
Dead reckoning only on their chartless seas,
Graft locking horns with musty Precedent,
Or fraternizing in a vile consent?

Oh, the damped jargon of the vile-at-law,
Reading, unreading, from the same sole word!
A truth, a lie, or neither, and so raw
To sense, perceives not, one must be absurd
Yet such the warpings of their legal trade,
They blunder on profoundly, undismayed

Ethics they need not, morals are their scorn,
Truth is an ass and honesty a fool,
Right is a weakling who should ne'er been born,
And Justice a blind scholar of their school,
Who, with their characters beneath her hand,
Studies whatever lessons they command.

Endless and endless, endless yet again;
Prevarications, quibbles, craft and lies,
Till the explicit and pellucid brain,
Shocked at their dense and dubious sophustries,
Scorning the slime of intellectual sewers,
Defeat and decency at once secures

Was't your ambition to elucidate
Some rational progression from this mass,
To vitalize its bulk inanimate,
Strip time's accretions from the truth that was,
Make it the equity that sense intends,
And not a hell-born myth with aimless ends?

Is it not certain skill o'er triumphs truth?
That clever casuistry defeats mere right?
Then is that verdict just that hes forsooth
In the confines of controversial might—
A grosser falsehood ne'er deceived mankind,
Nor fouler stigma shamed the human mind

To me it seems these were not meant for you,
Throned in a palace with your mistress mind,
High o'er the conflicts of the jostling crew,
You could have dwelt with wisdom unconfined,
Pacing a sober, philosophic course,
And holding audience with the universe.

The old Greek's dream, the music of the spheres
Had there assumed a clear reality,
And yearning to it with enraptured ears,
Perhaps some gleam of the evolved to be
You there had caught and given to mankind
An emanation from Creation's mind

Dwelling within a plenitude of stars,
Space spreading out her vast infinitudes,
The planets sweeping in their aërial cars
Like a concordance of divinities,
And peace celestial, brooding like a dove
In the quiescent passion of deep love.

Clasp'd in a throb of glory to the heart
Of the deep mysteries that dwell on high
Lost in the vast of contemplation's art,
Its wide profundities, its shoreless sky
Finding from earthborn miseries surcease,
Tranquillity, and cleanliness, and peace

Dwelling in space acquire an added sense
Prohibited to our material clay,
A brain to pierce the mysteries intense,
An eye omniscient in its wide survey,
A faculty surpassing both of these
Co-ordinate with the immensities.

Extensions, periods, space, progressions gone,
Æons but seconds in the lapse of time,
Measures, gradations, limitations none,
Terms privative submerged in the sublime,
Solution a volition of the mind
Conception Godlike, definite, defined.

There in a language, not of finite minds,
Hold converse with the new infinitudes,
Breathing fresh life from the pellucid winds
That sweep from where Creation's spirit broods,
Endowed with power to trace causation's course,
Soothe wisdom's thirst at her eternal source.

Pardon me, sir, my grasp of petty sounds,
Their combinations are inadequate
To measure a progression without bounds,
Crude limitations of our mortal state,
And so I leave it with a lateral eye,
Fixed on the eternal problem of the sky.

THE MISANTHROPE

Heart weary, sad, dejected,
Sick of successless strife,
The soul itself infected
With hatred dark of life
To the wild tempest given,
Time's aimless, wretched geck,
No faith in earth or heaven, —
A chartless human wreck

A fool devoid of purpose,
Guideless, without a goal,
An empty, blatant porpoise,
With crude, degenerate soul.
Unlettered, lawless, creedless,
A vicious, brainless sloth,
Productionless and deedless,
Iconoclastic Goth.

Sordid, corrupt and vapid,
Base bosom, bestial mind
To Self's wild hell of hydras,
Damned, deeded and consigned.
Slymed with the orts of passions,
With all the vices ripe,
Diseased with virtue's fashion,
The one excuse for life.

Who is this human devil?
We know him, you and I,
The ghoul met at the revel,
Where life gave us the lie
He stalks us like conception,
He follows us like doom,
If truth is not deception,
He'll occupy our tomb.

LINES WRITTEN ON THE ROLLING WHEELS

*WHICH WERE CARRYING FROM YORKTON TO REGINA
A R.N.W.M.P. AND HIS PRISONER*

PROLOGUE

LIFE-ENTHUSIASM

(Down)—

Out of the Morning Lands,
Links of an unseen chain,
With buoyant hearts and ready hands,
Seeking the Sunset Plain
Two from the olden modes,
To fashion Life anew,
Converging on their chosen roads
To the point they *must* pursue

SUB-PROLOGUE

POSTULATE AND PROPOSITION

(Morn)—

Two, with their birthright old,
Bent as they were begot,
Fulfilling the page by chance enscrolled,
Lords of a fore-doomed lot.

Over the trails they chose,
Riding towards the West,
Into the Future that Fate bestows,
As goals of a single quest.

THE PLAY (Act 1)

REALIZATION — RECESSION

(Day) —

The Charted Paths converge
To a point in the Sunset Plain;
One is clothed in the scarlet serge,
One in the garb of Cain
Doomed from the birth of Time,
Ordained, devoted, starred,
One to Order and one to Crime,—
The Victim and his Guard

THE PLAY (Act 2)

DECADENT—RESULTANT

(Afternoon)—

Over the Western Lands,
Two are riding again,
Hot hearts both, reluctant hands,
Bound with a visible chain
One is the slave of crime,
One is thrall to the slave,
And both ride over the Plains and Time
To a finish called the Grave.

SUB-EPILOGUE

REFLEX—SORROW

(Evening)—

Beautiful morn in May,
Wonderful verdant plains,
Through and over, two ride away,
Fettered in clanking chains
Fettered in clanking chains,—
The prisoner and his thrall
Ride on to Mystery's dark domains,
And the Deeds that *must* befall

EPILOGUE

DISSENT AND QUESTION

—ABYSSAL—

(Night)—

God of the Ordered Suns,
Of widths that awe the mind,
What is the Why of these wretched ones,
To crime and chains consigned?
What is the sacrifice
Of the sun and-soil germed clod?
Of all this dark, chaotic vice,
What is the product, God?

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 In dogma's cramped restrictions,
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 Whether Creation's tale displayed
 In dark, archaic dictions,
 Confound your theologic trade
 In endless contradictions,
 Take hope this day.

Across Religion's chartless tide,
 Storm-swept for countless ages,
 A wondrous star flings far and wide
 The light long sought by sages.

Carman his blade may throw aside,
His cat-dogmatic rages,
Jackson his hollow head may hide
In his schismatic pages
Henceforth this day.

The biblical believers all
Henceforth may rest contented,
No heretic, by heaven! shall
Pronounce our views demented
Creation's rise nor Adam's fall
Be more misrepresented,
For Genesis has found her Paul,
And his Epistle's printed
For sale this day

Behold the Reverend Chauncey Giles,
The prince of exposition,
Has catalogued the sacred files
With most profound precision,
Exponent of ten thousand styles,
The giant of decision,
He grasps the grapho-mental wiles
Of God's or man's elision
I' the text this day

He shows the true significance
Of great Jehovah's action,
Extracts philosopher and dunce
From crude or deep distraction,

He solves the sciences and sense
To the minutest fraction,
And sells the whole for fifty cents,
And warrants satisfaction
Complete this day

Burn ye, Philologists, your stock
Of lexicons and grammars,
Muckers in paleozoic rock
Drop fossils, picks and hammers.
Morality no more shall balk
When vice cuts loose her clamors,
For fused by GILES' electric shock
In adolescent amours,
They blend this day

Rejoice thou, world, long swenked in woe,
For suppers and salvations,
No blood of martyrs more shall flow
To seal fresh a firmations
All doctrines, middle, high or low,
Shall lose their imputations,
And merged in filiation's glow
Thro' Chauncey's emendations
Subside this day.

Thanks, Chauncey, all schismatics hence
May hie to Hell's dominions,
With Lucifer to re-commence
The conflict of opinions.

Perhaps his Sooty Eminence
May satisfy his minions,
The how he vaulted Eden's fence
And plucked Eve's fluttering pinions
I' the shade that day

Ye driveling dubs who write for fame,
Or Pros who write for dinners,
Ye scribblers shy both wit and aim,
Ye laymen, saints, or sinners,
Ye knaves of commerce, heirs of shame,
Ye corporative skimmers,
Eschew your doubts and stake a claim
For fifty cents, your winners,
Salvation's day

Omnipotence at last behold
Thy prescience comprehended,
Thy methods, motives, plainly told,
All doubts dispersed and ended.
The errors in Creation's mould
That haste left unattended,
Are grappled by St. Giles the bold,
Pulled into shape and mended
Offhand this day.

All ye Teutonic brotherhood,
Both sides of the Atlantic,
Give thanks that of your Gothic brood
Was done this feat gigantic.

The weaker nations since the flood
Have fail'd because pedantic,
But Chauncey crystallizes mud
With ease that drives them frantic,
Solution's day

This generation's thinkers claim
Man grown a mere mechanic,
Existence blighted in its aim,
By commerce waxed satanic.
Behold the protege of fame,
St. Giles the soul germanic,
Who puts six thousand years to shame,
And shews our age titanic
Thus prescient day

PHANTOMS

It was a cold Canadian night,
December snows were drifting fast,
While darker waned the dying light,
And fiercer rose the biting blast.
The snows in wreaths fantastic curl'd
Above the fences deep and high,
And dull above the frozen world
Was circled black the murky sky

The moon was surging through th' abyss
Of clouds which barred her painful way,
At times she seemed her path to miss,
And tumble through the columns grey.

Then quick her frightened face withdrawn,
The earth was draped in midnight woe,
And blindly the bleak wind howl'd on
Across the wilderness of snow

The pines which clad the valley's side
Sway'd groaning to the rocking gale,
The snawy birch, shorn of its pride,
Shriek'd forth in desolation's wail
The streamlet hoarse, chok'd by the drift,
Gave up the struggle in despair,
And instant closed the narrow rift,
Entombing it in silence there.

Constrained by thoughts I could not bind,
I wandered forth alone with care,
And, like the snow, across my mind
Tumultuous fancies drifted were.
And as I pressed against the blast,
A phantom form before me grew,
And flitting still, it hurried fast,
As I in vain did it pursue

It seemed familiar, and I strove
To clasp it, but 'twas all in vain,
Nor could my fondest wishes move
It but a moment to remain.
Till weary grown at last, I turned,
Dejected from my useless flight,
But, lo! my pathway undiscerned,
Lost lonely in the piercing night.

Ah! then I knew 'twas she indeed,
For oft of yore she had begutled,
And when my heart did wounded bleed,
This nemesis hath coldly smiled.
And but I know the doom is just,
This weary heart would beat no more,
But pillowed on the silent dust,
Sleep softly all its yearnings o'er

But I have sinned and will abide
The end with an unblanching eye,
My only aim in life, to hide
The tear and crush the rising sigh
So let me for my sin atone,
And all that makes life sweet resign,
The choice is past, the deed was done,
To bear the penalty be mine.

Oh that some spirit, in the hour
When sin delusive spreads her snare,
Would yield us the divining power
That bids the slumbering soul beware!
Or, oh that some presiding shade
Would bid the blinding passions cease
Which lure the soul that, once betrayed,
Can know nor innocence nor peace!

REVERIE

I deem'd not thus in former years
That I should stand at last alone,
Denied the sympathetic tears
Which half redeem the anguished groan
I deem'd not that with Friendship gone,
Rest even of defensive Hate,
That I should watch the storm sweep on,
And singly stand to meet my fate.

But time has undeceived my soul
No tender hand is stretched to save
Tossed helpless on destruction's shoal,
With straining eyes I view my grave.
Calumnious seas around me rave,
The clouds of Envy hide the sky,
And nothing but the darkening wave
And rocks of hate rewards my eye.

The beacon light of love that beamed
And lured me with its fleeting light,
But for a moment falsely streamed,
Then quenched in an eternal night.
Hate's elements conspired to blight
Dear hope, the lonely glimmering left,
And vision cursed her luckless sight,
As that last slender stay was left.

When friendship waned and blood grew cold,
Rebellious pride supplied their room,
And by her potent power controlled,
My cheek and eye preserved their bloom
But over love's untimely tomb,
Even pride retorted not the blow,
But crushed in desolation's gloom,
With streaming eyes confessed her woe

Who, who unmoved beholds the end
Of all unto his bosom dear?
Nor feels that swelling bosom rend,
Who feels nor sheds the bitter tear?
Even love we might dispense with here,
But where is gratitude's soft eye?
Has she, untimely, sought her bier
And left her shrine without a sigh?

Even she is gone, then let the storm
Destroy this helpless, drifting wreck,
Since not a heart of mortal form
Responsive throbs my grief to check
No human ties remain to deck
My dust with a memorial wreath,
Then let me die, why should I reck
To meet the consummation, Death?

But oh, if 'yond that drifting cloud,
A land for spirits true there be,
When reft of this my mortal shroud
Viola, I will meet with thee!

From fleeting earthly transports free,
In long communion we will rove,
And I will yield, as thou to me,
A mutual and eternal love

I care not now for earthly things,
Time here is not eternity;
Earth's pleasures never fold their wings,
But fool the fondly gazing e'e
Then Dust, I now surrender thee,
To this dark scene I bid adieu,
And though I ne'er Viola see,
I'll perish with that hope in view

THE "BLOCKS" OF WINNIPEG

This irregular straggler (save the little scene of the gamblers which is as old as the hills) will perhaps be unintelligible save to those to whom new conditions in a swiftly developing metropolis have made them familiar. I myself was an onlooker for sixty days, and if I do not write plainly enough, it is because familiarity has blunted the keen edge of observation. It was written for the participants, and they were pleased with it, both sports and floozies. They were all good fellows, and many a time I was as sorry for them as they were for me. If any of them should chance to read it in this volume, I hope they will subscribe to its ethics and pardon its asperities, 'whatever that is.'

It is noontide o'er the 'Blocks' at Winnipeg.

Silence shrouds them one and all

In a still, quiescent thrall,

There is a hush of deep tranquillity that wraps them
like a pall

On the streets where thousands pour

Swells the deep commercial roar,

But at noonday in the "Blocks"

All is quiet as the rocks

On a mountain high and hoar, -

Or a drear, deserted shore

Where the sea has ceased to beat,

Bound in ices at its feet,

Silent as a treeless crag.

It is noon above the "Blocks" in Winnipeg.

It is evening in the "Blocks" in Winnipeg
Home the gilded "Hoppers" come
And the "Blocks" begin to hum
With the ragtime airs and echoes of a reckless Bach'-
lordom.
Hear the gurgling waters dash
As the washers snort and splash,
Hear the lavatories pour
Their discharges to the sewer
That foul miasmatic cesspool where the typhoid breeds
secure
Hear the tread of hurrying feet
As they hustle out to eat
At the "Vemce," the "Olympia," or other gay retreat,
Already dressed in the best
Of which they find themselves possessed, -
"The future owes us millions," is the slogan of the West, -
Fancy shoes and brilliant tie,
Vests of every make and dye,
Hues as various as the colors of the constellated sky,
And their sox,
Oh, it seems almost too much!
Some inventor made a touch,
For their style beats all creation, or the devil, or the
Dutch.
Why the solar spectrum balks
To try issue with their sox
In the "Blocks",
To try issue with the particolored leg
It is evening in the "Blocks" in Winnipeg

The hour is ten within the "Blocks" at Winnipeg
Up the cold monastic stair
Sweeps a perfumed female air,
Let it come,
For the janitor is mum,
He's stricken dumb.
Floozies from a thousand shores,
Virtuous, semi so, and whores,
Drifting swiftly through the doors
In little flocks
In the "Blocks",
With their perforated sox
Twinkling daintily like stars
Or the multiplying evanescent borealis bars.
Charming girls!
Hair in pompadours and curls
And in Merry Widow swirls,
Coiled in crowns more fascinating than a hoop of gems
and pearls
And the gowns the bearers wear,
And the names the wearers bear—
Florence, beautiful and bold,
Chaste as Dian and as cold,
Helen, like her prototype,
Radiant, amorous and ripe,
Laura, garbed in sombre hues,
Queen of bosoms and of booze
Emily, soft and debonaire,
Flinging favors free as air,
And the tantalizing Maud
Dainty maids as ever trod
On the slopes of famed Olympus or on any classic sod.
The delectable temptations of the humane-minded god



By **WILLIAM S. BROWN**
Illustration by **CLARA**

It is midnight in the "Blocks" in Winnipeg,
O'er the city heaven streams
With the Polar Wizard's beams,
The spotlight of the Arctic with its iridescent gleams.
How they flash and flare and nod
Through a radius deep and broad!
Some sad angel strayed from Heaven heliographing
back to God
Through the zenith of the night
Sweeps the dim effulgent light,
Irradiating fancies in a swift elusive flight,
In a fantasy which mocks
It is midnight in the "Blocks."

It is midnight in the "Blocks,"
And the doors are thrilled with knocks,
And with perfect dreams of loveliness in silken robes
and frocks.
Through a half a-hundred doors,
Opening swiftly as she knocks,
Now the dainty floozie pours
In her perforated sox,
With her witching shoe and skirt
And a rare embroidered gleam,
How she vanishes, the flirt,
Like the lost one in a dream!
The doorways close.
The dramas taking place beyond are mystery, I suppose,
But the wise one—well he knows
That nor poetry nor prose,
Nor even the crude vernacular that reckes not what it
throws,

Can half portray the paradise of joy that ebbs and flows
 Beneath the rose,
Or paint ten thousand foolish things the staid world
 never knows.
 The tears, the smiles and mocks,
 The laughter and the shocks
Of the battledore and shuttlecock affections of the
 "Blocks."
The minute-long love-tragedies enacted in the "Blocks"
 By the floozies with their curls,
 And the bloods who love these girls.
The wreckers and the wrecked ones? whom along the
 torrent whirls
 The rapids of the "Blocks,"
 Where love's mirage gleams and mocks
O'er the eddies and the whirlpools filled with desolat-
 ing rocks
 In the "Blocks."
It is midnight in the "Blocks" at Winnipeg.

The hour is two within the "Blocks" at Winnipeg.
 Night grows fearful of the Dawn,
 And the shadowed East grows wan,
And silence threads the hallways with her noiseless
 garments on
 By the closely fastened doors
 Hollow-eyed Exhaustion snores,
And the frills of femininity strew couches, chairs and
 floors—
 There are things for truth to hide,
 There are scenes she casts aside,
The reckless, restless misery of the unmarried bride,

Let us hide it while we may
In the orchard-shadowed East,
Some old mother kneels to pray
For her daughter cast away,
For the victim of the feast,
For her little maid out West,
Who writes to Daddy yet, to say she still loves him
the best—
A loyal he that brightens up the long abandoned nest

While her bosom heaves with pain,
In her dreams she sees again
The undulating Eastern Hills, the homestead up the
lane,
Sees again the toil-worn pair,
Shoulders bowed and silvered hair,
The aproned mother knitting, Daddy smoking in his
chair,
Pictures old the room adorn,
On the floor are carpets worn,
Economy and cleanliness breathe like a summer morn.
On the cupboard 'gainst the wall
Lies a bursted rubber ball,
And stiffly sits a flaxen-haired and toed in sawdust doll.
And they speak with a tone,
And a language all their own,
Loud than the thunder voice which shook Belshazzar
from his throne,
All lone, lone, lone.
The innocence and innocent are flown, forever flown,
Lone, lone,
Ah, heavy groan!

To be what she has been and now to know what she
has known

Lust, you're a stone!

An Octopus, all brainless, without blood or flesh or bone,
A devastating prolocide that desecrates its own!

Lust, you're a stone!

Sleep, lovely rum, sleep

Till a slumber dreamless, deep,

Shall close the eyes which ne'er again shall wake in
shame to weep;

Sleep, sleep!

Does thy bosom, in its sighing,
Stir no chord within the heart

Of the wanton lecher lying

With his bloodless lips apart,

The index of senility, the harvest of his art?

Does there vibrate through his brain

Youthful laughter once again,

The thrill of scented breezes or the spray of cleansing
rain?

Does the gleam of country meadows,

Or of sisters pure and dear,

Pierce the lust-enwoven shadows

That encloud his spirit here?

God knows!

Yet who but looks with sorrow on such pitiful repose,

The intellectual rum and the desecrated Rose,

I suppose,

On these Commercialism its indifference bestows.

Well, Plutocrat, behold,

From your eminence of gold,

There is something coming to you, please to listen
while it's told

You have brought these lost ones here

Subject to your selfish aims,

And in Parliament each year

You display your statesman's claims.

You have filled the sunset plains

With a teeming multitude,

You have reaped the Western grains

To feed Europe's famished brood,

You have lined your vaults with wealth,

You've enriched yourselves by stealth,

But have you spent one dollar on your servants' moral
health?

No, you herd them into Blocks,

You extort the highest price,

You set virtue in the stocks,

And placed a premium on Vice.

If the maid who slaves all day

For her bed and scanty board,

If for dress she goes astray,

Can we wonder that she's whored?

She is sold and made a spoil,

She is made the whole world's scorn,

To place a mortgage on the toil

Of millions yet unborn,—

A wornout, battered implement, forsaken and forlorn;

A wreck without a hope of spring or recreating morn

You exaggerate your trade,

Take all the credit that you can,

Show me a millionaire self-made

Without his fellow-man

What could you yourself create,
Were a mine free to your hand?
Your lifetime could not excavate
The wealth you now command,
Yet the silly, slavish sons of men keep spinning ropes
of sand.

It's grand!
Come, my juggling Plutocrat,
Wake, behold where you are at!
Men are weary of the kill to live and customs and all
that,
Of the platitudes of knaves,
Of the sacrificial graves,
Of the sophistries and formulas that harness them like
slaves.

There's a truth that's long been lost,
But they'll dig it from the soil,
That man shall have his payment in proportion to his
toil

Let us hear no more of brain
In the high, heroic strain,
How it directs the muscle and creates the golden gain
Brain is useless without brawn
And the organizing head,
Without the thews to act upon
Might just as well be lead.

Let us see, then, that the toiling ones are clothed and
housed and fed,
With time to look up heavenward, not thankless for
their bread

The hour is three, within the "Blocks" at Winnipeg
Time is crawling towards the Dawn,
But "The Game" still staggers on
Around the baize the "Poker Fiends," with faces tense
and drawn,
Cry "Damn it, play, play on!"
Persistence that persisted in will wreck the toughest
brawn—
Hear the Candidate for bughouse honors cry, tho' all
is gone,
"Come, damn it, play, play on!"
What a litter strews the room
In the early morning gloom!
A wreck as the tobacco trust had bursted with a boom.
Pugh!—the stale dead smell of smoke
And the ashes, slush and butts,
Of the cuspidors expectorant would grip a porker's guts,
What a vicious use of wealth!
What a havoc waste of health!
Stern Nature at their elbow while the players think it
stealth.
Ah, well,
It's Hell!
Unmitigated, unredeemed, accelerated Hell,
Yes, Hell!
Some are winners—for to-night,
Some are broke and some in debt,
But the rake-off is a winner who can skin them all,
you bet
He's a player who can deal a mit, will put them all in
debt,
And he'll flay the last one yet,
Don't fret,

And dump him in the alley-way like a discarded rag:—
It is morning in the 'Blocks' in Winnipeg

It is morning in the "Blocks" at Winnipeg
Young Aurora flashes on,
Like a dewy startled fawn,

And Phoebus flings his arrows up the corridors of Dawn
Morn arrays herself in mirth —
Are there revellers on earth?
—Hush,—a single boozed refrain
Swells and dies away again

In a sob, while drunken stupor stifles down a cry of pain
In the eaves the early birds
Twitter untranslated words,
Calls matutinal and clean,
Calls devotional and clear,
Conjugal, devout, sincere,
Passion laden, yet serene.

Fresh as morning o'er the plain
Comes the poet with his pen,
And his ruminative brain
Recreates the night again
To the player he says "Pause,
For your rake-off is the grave,
There are powers more potent than the laws
That beg you to behave.
Poor slave,
Or perhaps a poorer knave "

To the floozies and their friends
He removes his hat and says

"Tell me where your pleasure ends?
Is it good for many days?
There's a cure for all your ills,
Beating dope, decent and pills.
It's monogamous, progenitive, and scarcely ever kills,
Why the morning birds are singing it across the plains
and hills,
Get married, pay your bills,
The life you have, bequeath again, great Nature smiles
and wills,
Get married, pay your bills,
Get married, pay your bills "

TO MRS. ANDREW McMILLAN

ON HER PAINTING OF THE SHAMROCK, ROSE
AND THISTLE

This is in recognition of the flowers
You painted long ago,
There images are still the same, but ours
Are stamped with time and woe.
I knew not then, nor knew I future fears,
That I should write it after many years.

The rose is still as fresh, each opening fold,
Newborn, bewilders death,
And whispers silver nights and days of gold,
And June's all fragrant breath.
But Time has taught us that all lives have tears,
And well we know it after many years.

The hardy thistle, like a tongue, would speak
Of distant heather hills,
And cheats me till I hear the pibroch break
Across the Scottish rills.
'Tis but our fancy that the music hears;
Delusion leaves us after many years.

The green, immortal Shamrock's triple leaves,
Green as its native shore,
A mystic song of things more mystic weaves,
And freedom evermore.
Its note is false, behold my Country's tears,
We knew it not till after many years.

Time left no change on these, why should he lean
So heavy on our head?
Why has he shewn to us the futile mean
Of life, when youth has fled?
Were it not better than be wise and sad,
Light-hearted, foolish, frivolous and glad?

Perhaps I speak too strongly, Time may not
Have dealt with you as me,
He may have granted your desired lot,
And borne thy wish to thee
If so, the secret yield, and I will crave
The immortal life that to the flowers you gave.

TO A STYLE OF LADY IMMENSELY POPULAR
AND UNCERTAIN

*SHE LIVES IN A HALO OF SILKS AND SOPHISTRY AND IS
TERMED IN POLITE LANGUAGE A MISTRESS*

You're a flirt, my little lady,
And your piquant ways are shady,
Your ambition is to conquer and destroy,
Had you the power of Alexander,
You would pillage, sack and plunder
Worlds that never knew the Macedonian Boy

As your pupil willy nilly,
I have acted soft and silly,
I confess, a pure and simple ass I am,
But since you've so soon defected,
May my corpse rot unrespected,
If one moment more I reck a single damn.

You were lovely, sweet and beauteous,
I was ardent, keen and duteous,
You were charming, I was willing to be charmed,
You were indolent honey,
I was palpitating money;
You were fire and I was dying to be warmed

Happy moons we loved together,
Floating in celestial ether,
In a glow that would have vitalized a clod,
Reason prudish and pedantic
Turned a bacchante romantic,
You were born a goddess, I became a god

But the vagrant in your bosom,
Bee-like, fled the plundered blossom,
You winged where newer-nectared flowers nod,
With a devilish precision
You destroyed our mutual vision,
You faithless, mercenary little fraud.

Adolescence would have grumbled
In a strain devout and humbled,
Breathing anguish in a deep, ecstatic woe,
But the student deep of woman,
Stung to critical acumen,
Sighs a curse and bids the faithless coquette go.

Time destroys Apollo's glory,
Turns the raven hair to hoary,
Chills the passionate pulsations once intense,
But as offset to his thieving,
His destruction and deceiving,
Grants wisdom as a partial recompense.

So from wisdom's peak gigantic,
I look down on passions frantic,
With an icy stare of forty-five degrees;
And consign you to the devil,
Whom I hope will treat you civil,
And let you have your choice to burn or freeze

Oh philosophy, resplendent,
Chaste, immaculate, transcendent!
You're the only love I ever more shall know;
And as you and I grow older,
Calm, sedate and ever colder,
I shall feel no youthful flames again, heigh ho!

*LINES WRITTEN FOR A GENTLEMAN**WHO QUARRELLED WITH HIS 'LADY FRIEND'*

You're tired, little sweetheart,
The novelty is gone,
Your restless heart is turning
Towards the great unknown,
So down the silent river,
Like a forgotten song,
I pass away forever,
So—little girl—"so long!"

The human heart is yearning
Always for something new,
And reckless, often spurning
The old, the tried, the true,
'Tis idle my complaining,
I have no right to you;
There's only this remaining,—
Dear little girl—"adieu!"

The world, so wide before us,
Will bring you happier days,
And you shall swell the chorus
In pleasure's golden maze,
In other scenes and places,
Forget the tears that fell,
Forget our fond embraces,—
So—little girl—"farewell!"

It grieves me, little woman,
That our brief love is o'er,
But to forget is human,
And God knows we're no more,
I could have wished it other,
To have you always—for
I loved you, little sweetheart,—
But—darling—' Au revoir!'

I'll struggle to forget you,
For you have taught me so;
Would I had never met you,
Or met you long ago,
Then we had been—ah, Heaven,
'Tis idle now to sigh,
We're parting here forever,—
Sweet little girl—"Good-bye!"

WRITTEN FOR W S

WHO WAS LEAVING HIS WINNIPEG WIFE

It yields no drop of comfort, dear,
To lessen my distress,
To know that you'll be happier far
With those who love you less,
'Tis written, God lives not in vain,
And all the bitter wrong
That I bestowed comes home again,
So—little girl—"so long!"

Some it would seem escape their debts,
With me it is not so,
My joy is purchased with regrets,
My passions paid with woe,
Our golden days, so swift and brief,
Our happy hours so few,
Now wring me with the deepest grief,
Oh, little girl—"adieu!"

It ill becomes me at my years,
With little ones and wife,
To shed for you these shameful tears
That should extinguish life,
The best that I should ask of Fate
Is darkest, deepest hell,
Mine own and every true heart's hate,
Yet, my sweet girl—"farewell!"

Sick-hearted, sad and lonely now,
It's up to me to go,
And I must wear a placid brow,
Nor shrink beneath the blow,
I know my punishment is just,
I have deserved it—for
I treated hearts of gold like dust,
Yet, sweetheart—"au revoir!"

Not "au revoir," for us remains
No meeting place on earth,
The future, like Sahara's plains,
Extends in arid dearth,
No limpid spring, nor flowery knoll
To cheer the drooping eye,
Or renovate the weary soul,
Oh, little girl—"Good-bye!"

*THE DREAMER'S ADDRESS TO THE MARCH
TEMPEST*

Thou frenzied Storm!

Come from the midnight east and rave with me,
From your wild orgies on the surging sea,

Come lightning plumed,

Cleaving with wings of madness the thick night,
Surge up the mountain's earthquake-bullded height,

Like spirit doomed

Rock in a fiend-like agony the throne
Of the white glacier that rules alone

Her vassal clouds,

Fear fill the rocks whose adamantine bed
By cold eternity's bleak hand was spread

In granite shrouds.

Thou roaring Wind!

Howl in the cavern till the solid world

Shake till the echoes from her bowels are hurled

In wild dismay,

On the rock-buttressed forest fling thy power,

Till every centuried oak a craven cower,

Like birchen spray;

The river lash till earth, the sateless whore,

Hath fertilized her gaping womb with gore,

And sucked his life,

Tread mankind into dust, his puny toil

Shake like a cloak from the degraded soul,

Thou thing of strife!

Free Element!

Upon thy meteor wing let me be borne
Till, panting, lags behind the flying morn,
 Strained with her flight,
O'er the abyss thro' the far space profound,
Where the eternities each other bound,
 Speed in thy might,
Farther and farther in thy viewless cars,
Thy speed augmenting to and by the stars,
 Cleave the wide blue,
There on thy tireless pinion poised at will,
To fall and to remount oh, let me still
 Be king of you!

Child of the Depths!

There no wild passion surges thro' the brain,
Darting its agonies of congealing pain,
 That burst the heart.
Pillowed upon eternity, the soul
Would call its elements back to control
 With god-like art,
Cast of its clay the spirit would be king
Of all the harmonies that mind can bring
 From her recess.
Imagination, sifted by the height,
Would revel in a purified¹ delight,
And breathe² to bless.

Thou soaring Truth!

Thine is the pinion which from earth must bear
The chainless spirit, who shall grasp and tear
 From death's cold brow

The veil that hides the secret from the eye,
That ignorance clouded sees his fellow die,
 He knows not how
Thou art the medium, and from thee alone
Shall come the knowledge sweet that will atone
 For centuries dead,
When poised upon the flawless orb of truth,
The new discovered and eternal youth
 Shall know no dread

 Monarch of Space!
On thy exalted wing the soul of man
Would laugh to scorn the triumphs of this span
 As things of night,
When inspiration from the rolling spheres
Would burst the darkness of his myriad years,
 And show him light
The spirit, broadened with its wide survey,
Would cast the links of fettered creeds away,
 And feeling, see
The reaching grandeur of the human mind,
Which once awakened scorns to be confined,
 Dull dust, to thee

 Thou ever Free!
Free since the worlds were circled on their course,
And poised in space upon negation's force,
 Free tho' mankind
Clad in the gloom of superstitious awe,
Afraid to ask and doubting what he saw,
 Lived, died, confined.

But morning comes, the thick dark night decays,
Up from the sea is flashed the living blaze,
 Whose brilliant stream,
Fann'd by thy potent wing, shall break the spell
That binds mankind to his delusive hell,
 And to his dream

 Power Uncontroll'd!
The spirit of immortal man exceeds
All that is written of ideal creeds,
 In dying tongues,
Fair science's ladder scaling to the skies,
From vigils long of the inspired wise,
 Augments its rungs,
And superstition, who hath long kept time,
Grows timorous and fears to further climb
 Its cheating hand,
At last deceives itself, its grasp grows weak,
Down the long years it falls with dying shriek,
 Truth bursts her bands

 Spirit of Life!
To thee thy vassal thus prefers his prayer,
That thou may'st come again and present share
 His vigil wild
The baff'd critic here his jibe hath lost,
I do confess me, even at the most,
 Wild wind, thy child
I know in justice to this daring rhyme
That the conclusion should have been sublime,
 But thou, my pen,
Indite the reason lower, and thy flight,
And give it to them straight, these sons of night,
 'Twas writ for men.

*ON THE SOUTHWARD FLIGHT OF
THE WILD GEESE*

Aye winging southward to the sunny days,
Where there is still green sedge and rushy fen,
And rippling, muddy shores and silent bays,
Far from the haunts of men.

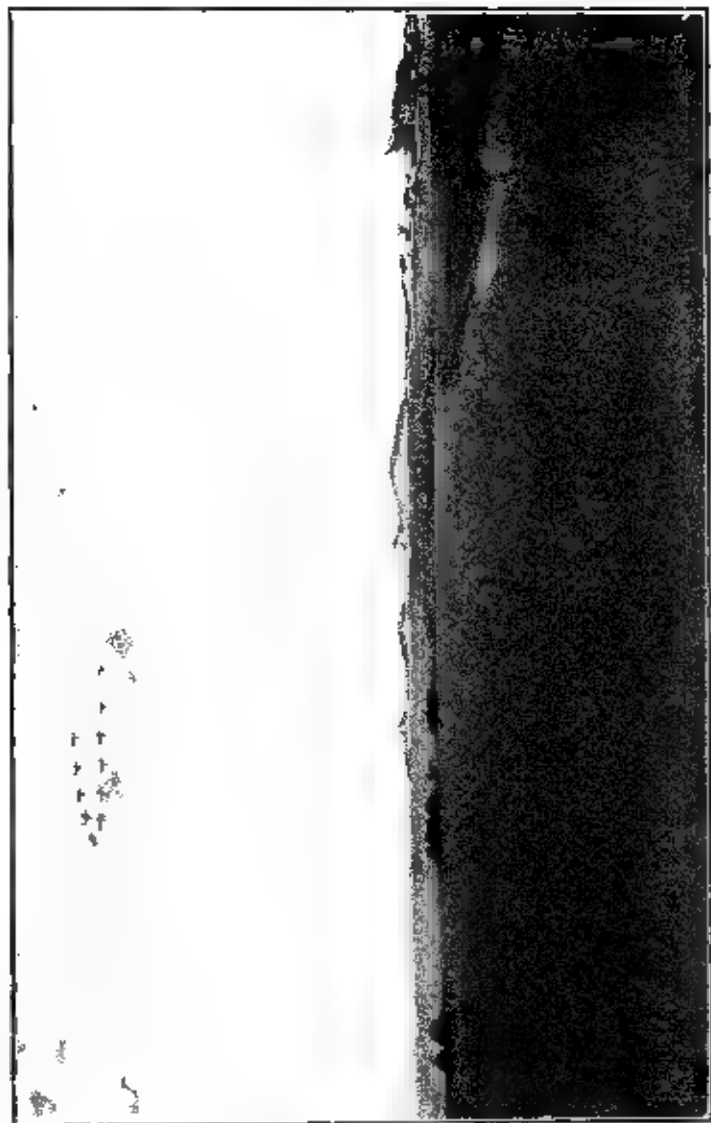
And low green islands lying to the sky,
Where wild rice grows serenely year by year,
And aimless frogs pipe listless lullaby
For you and yours to hear

Shores wooded deep where Nature silent broods,
Waiting her cycle in majestic calm,
Waiting the coming of antarctic floods,
Or equatorial palm.

Quiescent, tranquil, passionless, serene,
Garbed in the dignities of solitude,
O'er-archèd with the deep sky's silent sheen,
Throned on the placid flood

These are thy haunts, when autumn, come again,
Compels you from the grey days to be gone,
Whence o'er vast prairie and huge mountain chain,
You float serenely on.

Is't some wild instinct of migration makes
Our bosoms echo to thy southward call?
Dreading the drear brown leaves and early flakes,
And winter's solemn pall.



One at a time, please the huge mountain that
You find serene life in

Chill misty morns, dank skies and landscapes grey.
The pattering sagoed hail thro' leafless trees,—
Your honking high would lure us far away
From these and such as these.

No human pilot has the skill that guides
The long, straight sweep of your unerring flight;
'Tis the same power manipulates the tides,
And makes the day and night

Oh, if that Power would give us wings to flee
Far from the haunts of infamy and crime,
Where virtue dwells in clear sobriety,
On the far shores of time!

By sterile wastes where mad delusions gleam,
And the wild conflicts of ambition roar,
Tearful awaking from this hideous dream,
Joy'd that it was no more

On dreamy isles in peace and calmness drest,
Where we could lay these human longings by,
And find the long sought, satisfying rest, -
No shock, no tear, no sigh.

The petty ills, the villainies of life,
Its grudged gratuities, its sombre smiles,
The faithless honor, the degrading strife,
Unknown in those far isles.

There I could lay me as the little child
Pillows its head on the maternal heart,
Lapping in dreaming innocence, beguiled
By an immortal art.

Earth's human-built confinements wrapt away,
Reft the ambitions of the sentient clod,
The spirit, freed from this detested clay,
Gazing unawed on God.

Idle our wish, these limitations are,
So gross we may not voyage the air with you,
Like hope's expiring beam you fade afar
I' the unfathomed blue.

AN ELEGY

ON THE DEATH OF A YOUNG FRIEND

Dark frown'd the heavens at thy humble birth,
Chill wail'd the northern blast, around thy cot
Infantile there did stune no chastened mirth,
Nothing that breathed of a beloved lot.
A mother only, in a wondering woe,
Gazed on thy helpless form and soul of snow.

Ushered to earth in darkness worse than pain,
Thrown on the billows of eternity,
Where still to struggle for the shore is vain,
Such the ungrateful fate accorded thee
No wonder then that thou hast pass'd away
Beyond the liquid arch, unknown and grey

Full of a soul that never brook'd command,
Too proud for the submissive path to rule,
Too human for the earthly's iron hand,
Too wise to be of their vainglorious school,
Thou mark'st the farces of official strife
And recognized the lifelessness of life

Who could be charmed with clay when music fades?
Or who would live when love and beauty die?
Who mark the foliage shivered from the glades—
And concord still with such reality?
Were it not better then, like thee, to yield
To calm oblivion, where no sculptors build?

The spiritual part of man to thee
Was not the path to riches and excess,
Thou saw'st the cheat of loud hypocrisy,
And knew 'twas vain to try to make it less.
That man had sold his soul to fancied truth,
Was old to thee, though thou wert still a youth

And yet I say 'twere better far that thou
Shouldst know the pain it cost thee to condemn,
Than that thou shouldst to their vile methods bow,
And join the role of cheated cheats with them
Better to die alone, devoid of fame,
Than that such bars should prolong thy name

Thrice happier thy sad fate, thou soulful one,
Than his who flatters for a name such men,
For such as thee shall be when these are done,
And Earth shall blush to name their deeds again
For yet the day shall come when life shall be
The conscience of itself and man be free

Thou hadst no wish to dwell where mankind are,
Divided from themselves, the mouths and hands
And hearts of different creeds, and each a star
Shot from its orb and loosened from its bands —
The hoarding Christian shrieks the "Word of God,"
And turns lean hunger hungry to the road

He gives the Lord the glory of his breath—
Fit tribute from a microscopic soul,
Oh, what decay is woven with the wreath!
What dull, lethargic demon keeps control!
The mind of Man is shrunk till Custom keeps
The key of Truth, whose great Creator weeps.

The burning maid, with peach-bloom on her cheeks,
Lascivious smiles in fancied chastity,
Nor deems the cooing warning that she speaks,
The note that gives to sacredness the lie.
Hell on her lips and lust upon her hand,
Death on her breast and sin her subtle wand.

The married virtue, swell'd with breeding death,
With eyes which speak of midnight dreams of love,
Pours on some youth her false and honeyed breath,
And rends the bonds once ratified above;
Holding the creed that luxury alone
Becomes a crime when Envy makes it known

The pbe of worldliness, the foolish freak
Of idiotic power, the whim of kings,
The purblind wisdom of the Christian meek,
Who fain would harmonize unequal things;
These thou hast passed for thou were not betrayed
By the dull sophists ignorance hath made.

Better, far better, that thy spark expired
In loneliness of soul, than ever find
A thing to be beloved or admired
Amid the filth of frivolous mankind
Sleep thou, or live *thy time*, I wish were *mine*
To know the freedom of a soul divine.

TO M——

I do not languish for thee, cruel maid,
I would not honor thee so much, but still
My pride keeps whispering thou hast been betrayed,
And makes my passion master of my will.
Why will not Pride allow us rest and peace
When love, and faith, and mutual minds can cease?

This is no plaint of one whose heart is broken,
My misery burn'd itself to dust ere such
Was left me for a life-long, lifeless token,
And yet at times I hunger for thy touch.
Oh, to be clasped as we were wont to be,
In peace of soul and concord's ecstasy!

I knew my bosom thine, and yet it pass'd
Without cognizance from thy realm away,
Nor sought I refuge from the fatal blast
That closed the evening of my transient day
How could we ever smile and know our light
Was starlike, shooting into murky night?

It could not well be otherwise, for we
Were children in our love, without a care
Of nightfall coming darkly, dimly,
Till lo! a change from rapture to despair
At times I will not yet believe it so,
But night is here and bleak the tempests blow

Oh, morn of love, how beautiful thy beams,
Bright, warm and tremulous, their golden joy
Poured through my heart its soul-diffusing streams,
Which were not made for moments to destroy!
Brief Glory, hast thou faded into fear?
My soul makes answer, for her night is here.

Would I could say we might be happy yet,
Such bridled hope but analyzes pain,
And pain reaps torture from that word forget,
And each and all are idle and are vain
Nothing remains, one ray of hope to throw
On drear Remembrance groping o'er her woe.

Would that I might be mortal where I ought,
But 'tis my fate to be in sin divine,
Adhering to my selfishness of thought,
While pain increases with each added line.
My soul, it is not vain for thee to say
Thou hast redeemed each footstep made astray

I know not why, but I have deemed it was
Each one's ambition for to humble mine,
For still they have traduced without a cause,
I have ascribed this motive, too, as thine
But now I have recalled this charge from thee,
For I believe thou loved'st, tho' briefly, me

And howe'er briefly, I forgive thee, dear,
I should have kept aglow the sacred flame,
But my o'erburdened heart kept silence here,
'Twas still perverted and with thee the same.
A foolish pride still kept expression chain'd,
And she too vanished when nought else remained.

Oh, days of bliss, ye can return no more!

Oh Birchen Grove, no more within thy shade,
Where violets sleep, shall mungling spirits pour
Their dew upon the wreath which passion made;
May never mortal foot that spot profane,
Let it, like love, oblivioned remain

I ask thee not to chide me—I would fain

Request—but no—forgive me—I have done—
It maddens me till whirls my burning brain
To deem we might be as we once were, one.
I can submit to fate—my Love divine,
Do not reproach me, for my heart is thine.

I cannot put away those blissful scenes,

The heavens lighted with the shimmering stars,
But Time, with dusty mantle, intervenes
And chides my memory and my picture mars,
And Darkness, closing deeper round my soul
Points to my grave as the completed goal.

This is not vain, for I have given thee

My love, and with it—life—and these were all
I could accord, save immortality;
And this thou hast, though yielding it I fall.
But what repose can Ruin draw from Fame?
There is no balm in an immortal name.

Yet should ambition and that hate of theirs,

Which is not worthy notice, fool me on
Across my toppling bridge of broken years,
Defiant pride shall serve me as a sun
But death *will* come and claim his bond of clay,
And then my spirit freed shall find her day

Earth has no glory I would not resign
For one brief hour with thee like those of yore
To feel thy heart in unison with mine,
But these are fled and can return no more
To thee I worthless am—then wherefore wait
If thou hast freedom, open, Death, thy gate

LINES TO A C E

C — B, manipulator,
Would be, if you could, creator;
There is nothing Jove-like in your face or form,
And with all your big assumption,
You have very little gumption
And scarcely wit enough to keep you warm

With a petty class of bosses
You have posed as a Colossus,
A giant midst the pigmies of your clan,
But for all your self blown figure,
All your arrogance and rigor,
You size up very small beside a man

Old VanHorne soon took your measure
Gave you latitude and leisure,
He soon totalled up your engineering skill,
So you lugged your stores of knowledge
Back to where you got them, college,
And started building railways at McGill

Then void reason or excuses,
You essayed the electric juices,
A subordinate and placeman at "The Falls"
There yourself and truckling factors
Made life hell for the contractors
With stupid insolence, the worst of galls.

You resigned with due precision,
Took a partisan's position
On the railroad built to reach, well, God knows where,
But the Cobalt's silver wonder
Into foresight turned a blunder,
Then the Tories came and you went up in air

In the sewers at North Bay, sir,
With the tippling Ward and Fraser,
Of actual work you showed your famous skill,
After three years' trying, coaxing,
Time extensions, and much boasting,
You proved that sewage would not run up hill.

Next of Beck's catch-penny "Hydro,"
You became lick-spittle Fido,
In the clique with B—— P——, the mean and cheap;
For a stall in Whitney's stables
You attested all their fables,
And stuck your blade in Nichols good and deep.

Then in Winnipeg, grown glorious,
You began a course uproarious,
But made a slip and nearly shot your wad,
And to Stewart, whose swift decision
Saved your project and position,
Your gratitude was mean, deliberate fraud.

C—— B., if you desire,
We will prove that you're a liar,
 A shuffler scarcely worthy our contempt,
A thankless, treacherous jobber,
And a mean, deliberate robber,
 From honesty and gratitude exempt

'Tis not animus, but honor,
With the stigma cast upon her,
 When you ruined me with fraud to shield your job,
That makes me take the trouble
To expose and prick the bubble
 Of a faithless engineer and selfish slob.

With your moribund field marshal,
S——, the lazy, vapid, partial,
 Assisted by the would-be grafter H——,
You assayed your knavish thieving,
And deliberate deceiving,
 I've said my say, it's up to you to shunt

POSTSCRIPT

Crazy Buck, the scoundrel dire,
Born a thief and bred a liar,
 Is a perjurer by right of birth and blood,
But the sum of his abuses
Gave you right, nor even excuses,
 To drag me and my credit in the mud

Contra, C——, you're a liar
Not by birth but by desire,
 ('Tis presumed you studied ethics in your youth.)

DUST AND ASHES

But for one of your condition,
Your accounts and exposition
Are direct and open travesty of truth.

"Finally" -like Saul of Tarsus, -
You're the prince of frauds and farces,
Take this trifle as you choose in work or sport,
The result to this converges,
I'll substantiate these charges,
In poetry, in prose, or in the Court

A BALLADE

*BEYINGE THE WONDROUS HISTORIE OF THE FAMOUS OUT
LAWES. FRANK AND JESSE JAMES. WITH SOME
ACCOUNT OF THEYRE MORE DESPERATE AND
BLOODYE DEEDES*

(With thanks to Percy's Reliques)

I wode ye telle goode peopel alle,
Bothe Lorde and humble Lown,
Of wondrous haps that did befall
Two men of great renoun.
And fyrst, tho' scarce there little needes,
Proclayne I will theyre names,
Beyinge men of wilde and cruele deedes,
Both Frank and Jesse James.

In farre Missouri theye were borne,
A laund moste faire to see,
There wayves the talle and silken corne
Besyde the river free,

And prairies smothely spreaden wyde
In summer grasses dighte,
And broadde Missouri rolles his tyde,
A faire and lovely sighte

There on these grene and slopyng bankes
These lads were wont to playe,
Disportyng in theyre elfine pranks,
As littel childrene maye,
And layde each nighte in gentle cotte,
Theyre mother wepte to see,
How faire theye looked nor hadde she thought
What theye as men should be.

Theyre mother loved them muche, I ween,
And welles she mighte, I swounde
No comelier children mote be seene
In all the countree rounde
Theyre littel lymbs as sprightlye were
As antelope at playe,
Bright, smiling eyne and winsome air
And laugh withe pleasance gaye.

At seven yeare, with pistol brighte
Theye coulde the curlewe winge,
To shoote the swallowe in her flighte,
Wyth them were common thunge
And featlye theye coulde broncho ryde,
Well cynched withe buckeskine thonge
Theye layde them on his heaving syde
And gallopped thus alonge

One legge yeboue theyre palfrey's backe,
 Beneath his belly one,
One hande yegrasped his hairy necke,
 The other helde a gunne;
And so coulde take a mortal aime
 Across theyre courser's breast,
And coulde the skimminge swallowe maime
 As featlye as at reste

A longe tyme thus in such lyke sorte
 Theye spente theyre youthfule yeares,
Theyre mother smiled upon theyre sporte,
 No cause hadde she for tears
Tille gorye warre's accursed hande
 Loosed forthe in bloode and fire,
Then joined theye Quantrell's cruеле band,
 To doe deedes felle and dire.

Long in that bande theye stayed fame,
 As bolde as beste therein,
And spent theyre hands wyth murther stame,
 And eke their soules wyth sinne;
Tille hardened wyth the luste of fyghte,
 And sauage yeares of stryfe,
Theye spylled bloode wyth fierce delyghte,
 And littel rycked of lyfe

Of many a felle and gorye scene
 Thys cruеле bande were cause;
Theye slew and roide awaye amayne,
 Defyant of the lawes.

And such the steeds of metal rare
That these bolde raiders bore,
The next day founde them safe afarre
A hondrede myles or more.

Long tyme their fortune loosed to playe,
Their eville deedes to plye,
Tille toyled at last in grene wode theye
Meseemes theye all must die.
And many a robber bolde that daye
Did manful yelde his breath,
And many a true man gasping laye
To deale these villains deathe

In runnunge fyghte for fyfty miles
Theye did theyre leaguers scathe,
And weary wrot wyth crafty wyles
To wray them from theyre pathe.
Alle wolde not doe this dauntlesse bande,
Sore shent wyth wondes and maimes,
Hauve yelt to lawe's or deathe's demande,
Save Frank and Jesse James.

Theye, wounded sore, in bloodye plyghte
Rade on without repose,
And delvyng deeply in the nyghte,
Sought shelter from theyre foes.
Long weekes in hiduance dark theye bode,
Tille doole and pain were spedde,
Then comynge forth from gude grene wode
Found price ypon their heade.

Then sayde these brothers bolde to thrive,
Sith we are outlawes mayde,
And we must slaye so we maun live
Theyre bloode be on their headde.
And from that daye in eche soyle
Oft didde theye murthering slaye,
Then fylled theyre saddle bags wyth spoyle
And swiftly rade awaye.

Then wyth the golde so gayned fulle ofte,
The pryce of harmlesse bloode,
Lyke gentlemen theye lyved softe,
Wyth alle thinges for theyre goode.
Disguised then in bower and halle,
Wyth dames of fayrest pryce,
They payde theyre compliments in thrawl
To lovelye ladyes' eyes.

Soone wolde theye hie awaye againe
O'er plaine and praines wyde,
To holde uppe stayge or railwaye traine,
And plunder alle besyde.
And them whoe'er theye were theye fand
Dispute their wickedde wille,
To paye instanter on demande
These cruele fiendes wolde kille.

Thus did theye thrive in deedes of bloode,
Nor aide nor friendes did lacke,
Who slipped them warning words when wode
Or ruth were on theyre tracke

Forre there were many swore a nay,
These men wyth bloode were sprent,
And list againste the worlde's say
That theye were innocent.

Tille as theye robbed the Northfield Banke
Wyth others of their crewe,
Where Wheeler thynned theyre godlesse ranke,
The harmlesse clerke theye slew
Because he wolde not yelde on paine,
His houses golde and store,
Theye put a bullet in his braine
And leyft him in his gore.

Then after these and deedes more felle
Theyre champions grieved sore,
And thenceforth as old stories telle,
Denyed them more and more.
Until was left one onlye friende,
Theyre faythful mother deare,
Who proved staunche until the ende
Through many a bloodye yeare.

And once ensconced in her home
With feyver worn to fraile,
Some skillful officers did come
To lighten them to jaille.
But fearful of these brothers then,
Theye threw a msale wylde,
Yet captured not these desperate men,
But slewe a little childe.

Theyre mother's arme destroyed was,
Theyre infant brother slayne,
And yet these minions of the lawes
Clecpt not this awfulle twain.
This bloodye deede was cried down
By all good men and true,
But Frank and Jesse's bullets founde
In after tymes a fewe.

One nyght in halle where daunce was lette,
A quarrel did ensue,
And these two brothers hard beset,
Full seven men they slew
While as theye fled in haste awaye,
Theyre deadly skill theye phed,
That those who faine wolde bar the waye
That moment felle and died.

Then fled in haste to Mexico,
Where ranchmen theye becayme,
And lyved a tyde as never moe
To lead a life of blame
But on a hairst some villains thralle,
Roused them to deedes of scathe,
When as the deadlye pistol ballie
Alone could ease thyre wrathe.

Then to the northward hied anon,
Young Jesse took a frere,
And dwelt in fair St Joseph towne
With lyttle children deare.

Whilome the price upon his heade
Set envye for to winne,
And by a comrade's wicked fraude
This outlawe was tooke in

For wyled into his confidence
This spye beguiled him so,
That on another raid's pretence
This coward wrought him woe.
He recked not of the children gaye,
Nor of the faythful wife,
So he might get the gold infee
By rieving him of lyfe

And fortune served his purpose felle,
For on a fatal daye,
Jesse, who loved his mother welle,
Her picture wolde displaye.
And mounted high upon a chaire,
When as he turned his heade
To hang in place that likeness deare,
This villain shot him dead

Then far and neare the thousands came,
And spent, I ween, theyre golde,
To have it said theye saw the same,
That outlaw's visage bolde.
And many graunted not beliefe,
So brave a man colde dye,
But when theye saw his mother's griefe,
There mote be no denye.

For welke he helde his mother's hearte,
She being of dauntless minde,
And fulle as valiant in her parte
As he was in his kinde.
And soothe she shewed no sorrow wylde
When, as her son was slaine,
But when she kissed his orphan childe,
Then felle her tears like raine.

A pardon then for Frank was graunt,
And alle men do declare
No man will do you lesser scante
Or lye more debonaire.
He now dwells in Missouri's vale,
A prooffe of wondrous claims,
That you have hearde no idle tale
Of Frank and Jesse James.

THE FAILURE'S POETICAL TRIAL BALANCE

What is the audit of my years,
The grum sum total of my time?
A few grey hairs, some dried up tears,
And worthless skits of rhyme.

Far from the golden mean astray,
Life's happy medium I abhorred;
My life's young visions shorn away,
All torn and battle scarr'd.

The practicalities of life,
The gaunt necessity to stand,—
Fate's treacherous and remorseless knife,
And my successful hand.

The fire and the logic clear,
Whelm'd in the world's wild, swirling flood,
Death's dread abysses yawning near,
The strife twist brain and blood

The spiritual declaring shame
As the high intellect descends
To aid the clamoring stomach's aim,
Confusion without ends.

Torn from the star ideal of youth,
Pitched with the swined and bovin'd crowd
To trample down the gems of truth,
And cry my wares aloud.

Wild weltering in chaotic dreams,
Flood-borne and sweeping to my doom;
Mocked by the soul's electric gleams
Thro' the Egyptian gloom

No hoped-for shore, no summered isle,
Whereon the failing heart might brood,
The crashing shocks, despair's damned smile,
The all-consuming flood.

Rise, wretched demons, from the froth,
The scum, the waste of this wild sea;
Crush finally, destroy the moth,
The fool I knew as me.

I will not clamor at my fate,
I knew my own equipment light,
Come finish as I lived, in hate
Deep down in final night

Devoid of goal or guiding star,
To manhood purposeless I grew;
Now where destruction's demons war,
I sink at last from view

And since I know that all is lost,
Rise to my aid, thou mailed Hate;
I curse the whole devouring host,
And die, defying fate.

AN EPISTLE TO MY SISTER PEGGY

Were I an old Apostle,
With inspiration's flow,
You'd had this late epistle,
My sister, long ago,
But poesy reverted
Her light of other days,
And leaves me sombre-hearted,
In cold, prosaic ways.

Consumed as if by fire,
The wild, poetic soul,
With limitless desire
Shrunk to a blackened coal,
The cyclones of ambition,
The hurricanes of fear,
Tornadoes of contrition
Have left but ruins here.

The old ideals shattered,
Their glories swept away,
The dreams of boyhood scattered,
Its idols turned to clay,
The things I longed for vainly
Swept far beyond my ken,
And now my muse wields mainly
A dark and sombre pen.

I know I'll never, never,
The olden fire regain,
Which, like a molten river,
Once flooded heart and brain;
For years of toil and terror
Have turned the spirit grey,
And vice and crime and error
Have swept it all away.

The intellectual keenness,
Integrity's proud pride,
Dulled with the eating meanness,
In sullen depths subside,

And things that in youth's morning
The untainted heart would hate,
Instead of hailed with scorning,
Are deeds to emulate

I've made mistakes a many,
For which I've paid and pay,
I've acted well the nanny,
And should be eating hay,
The life I have I made it,
Yet here I testify,
That I will never credit
This vile world's bitter lie.

Life was not all abhorrent,
I've made my triumph good
I stemmed Niagara's torrent,
Harnessed her mighty flood
In bonds for puny mankind,
To toil through night and day,
Till some new cataclysm
Shall sweep it all away

I claim it as high honor,
Where other rhymers stood,
And trembling, gazed upon her
Chicks of a callow brood,
I took my skill and daring,
And leagued with Fate, have done
A task past all comparing,
A new thing 'neath the sun

'Twas well, for I could never
Subsist by verse alone,
And I detested ever
The begging minstrel's groan.
The genius e'er consented
Her calling hush to soil,
Appeared to me demented,
When there was room to toil.

I may not have acquired
The glittering altitude
Where poets old, inspired,
In awe majestic stood,
But I have heard the river,
Mad,—leaping to the sea,
In thunder voice repeating
Wild mysteries to me.

I wooed it like a woman,
I wed it like a wife,
And with a heart most human,
Bound up its very life,
But there was in the river
A love I could not bond,
Its pulse beat faithful ever,
Unto the Great Beyond

Futile, alas! oh heaven,
What is it in the heart,
All scarred and torture riven,
That makes us but a part?

The best, most loved, desired
Attained, begins to pall,
And always, it transpired,
We ne'er possessed it all

This is the fine of Nature
For self-created gloom,
Always distortion's feature
Usurps her frightful room,
And since mine own volition
In joyless paths has strayed,
I must accord submission
To that which I have made.

And yet for all my whining,
I've known most noble hearts,
To love and help inclining
Their chief and choicest parts,
And bosoms ever yearning
To aid me in the strife
With counsel, cash or warning,
And some ev'n with their life.

I have no great luck coming,
I've kept the pace that tells,
I've kept my years a-humming
With this or something else,
Meseems I was created
A fatalist in vain,
A thousand times defeated
To take the field again

There's something in our breeding,
Our aspirations mixed;
Ambitions, moulting, seeding,
Desires between, betwixt,
The brain pellucid, Celtic,
Despising fatal sloth,
The Will cooped like the Baltic,
Our actions of the Goth

Always, it seems, I ever
To my poor self revert,
A theme that yet was never
Congenial with high art,
But I was ne'er created
For the diviner flights,
And 'twill be much if rated
Among the lesser lights

And yet, —oh hungry spirit!
Cease thy ambitions vain,
Beyond what we inherit,
How little we attain?—
Roll up the broken pages
Of love and hope and hate,
Subscribing with the sages,
And lay it all to Fate.

What are we in the millions?
A rain-drop in the sea,
A star in all the trillions
That dot immensity,

The gods must smile compassion,
From their exalted ken,
To mark the pigmy passion
That shakes the souls of men.

No more of that—how are you?
Be happy, sister dear,
May bitter sorrows spare you
The unavailing tear,
My love I cannot waft it
Across the plains, 'tis true,
I with my loved ones left it,
And so it's there with you.

Remember me to Molly,
To Georgie, Joe and Kate,
To Maggie and my Dolly,
With her dark eyes sedate,
And soon I'll send a letter,
In straight and honest prose,
That will explain much better
How my existence flows.

Good-might, my fairest sister;
My sister, good as fair;
God was a wise investor,
Who moulded you so rare.
If there is one 'neath Heaven
Can point a path to me
That is not torrent riven,
My sister, it is thee.

TO A YOUNG MATRON

The writer of these lines, being a native of Ontario, that wealthy and wonderful Province which has earned for itself the reputation of having the lowest birth-rate in the world, was surprised one evening, in a Winnipeg City park, to see a young matron with a little brood of six as sprightly and healthy little ones as has been his lot to see. The mother, herself, was almost girlish in her appearance, and her beauty and vitality were all the reproach and confutation required by the barren wives of the older Province

Madame, I know not from what slime
You grew a rank exotic,
But such fecundity's a crime,
Immoral and quixotic,
Sad relic of an antique time,
Where woman breeds neurotic,
You are the product of some chime
Illiterate, despotic,
Not of this age.

How dare you flaunt your rank excess
In such immodest seeming?
So loosely gay and bold as brass,
In youthful colors streaming,
Your husband's sure some stupid ass,
And you, you must be dreaming,
Six toddlers, madame, six, no less,
And with the seventh teeming,
This modest age.

Dear Madame, please let me remark
That there's a rare specific
Which holds the moon her monthly arc,
Exact and scientific,
A product of Brazilian bark
Or minerals soporific,
Inhibits all eclipses dark,
Or these results terrific,
This sporting age.

You'll find it fully advertised,
Both hourly and diurnal,
Its virtues strongly emphasized
In every daily journal,
All races that are civilized
Have made their sport eternal,
And left it to the circumcised
To pay the toll infernal,
This wise old age.

Since we desire to fill our plains,
Gigantic population,
Let ignorance bear a mother's pains,
And multiply the nation;
But we with leisure, cash and brains,
Prohibit copulation,
We breed our patriots from the veins
Of dark degeneration,
Thus prudent age.

Philanthropy is our ideal,
So we import Galicians;
Poor homicides, we deeply feel
Their murderous cotions;

Occasionally they make a spiel
That shocks our intuitions,
But Eve and Adam had to steal
The sense of their conditions,
E'er clothed that age.

Lady, perhaps you think I am
A foul, degenerate creature;
That these my counsels are a sham,
With vice in every feature,
But let me say again, madame,
We ostracize Repeature,
Because our women hold the palm
For stultifying nature,
This barren age

POSTSCRIPT

Madam, perhaps your little brood
God holds as a credential
That you have never fouled the flood,
Creative and potential,
That you have held your motherhood
In sanctity essential,
And hail'd the product of your blood
In wisdom deferential,
Even in this age.

TO MOLLY

ON HER BIRTHDAY PARTY MARCH 17 1908

When your party and gay gratulations are o'er,
And to coffee and cake succeed morn and distress,
When you're clearing the wreck from the dining-room
floor,

Let me hope that your shadow may never grow less.

Doubtless many were there who were warm-hearted
friends,

And some were but friends of the moment, I guess,
But believe me, dear Moll, a true Irishman sends
His wish that your shadow may never grow less.

It's a cinch that when Fortune is coming your way,
That the mob will rush forward their faith to express,
But here's to the friend who, in life's blackest day,
Will wish that your shadow may never grow less.

For you—may the winds of misfortune ne'er blow,
Nor sorrow's snow whiten each raven-like tress,
May the roses of hope still continue to grow,
And your shadow, so trim, may it never grow less!

But should you, like our mother, begin to expand
Beyond the neat girth of each elegant dress,
Consistent—I'll bow to proportions so grand,
And still pray that your shadow may never grow less.

Then here's Erin go-Bragh, may the Saint's hallowed day
In peace and prosperity ever progress,
Till the Orangeman and Papist united shall pray
That your birthday's bright shadow may never grow
less!

WINNIPEG AND WHEAT

Winnipeg throws out her thousands to inhale the virile
air

On this prairie evening, brilliant and complete,
The electric bulbs and carbons pour a vivifying glare
On a scene earth cannot parallel or beat,
There's an optimistic sense,
There's a thrill of life intense,
That pervades the laughing crowds upon the street,
And above the crash of wheels
There's a minor murmur steals,
'Tis the omnipresent rustle of the wheat.

The surging throngs are jocund with a buoyancy their
own,—

"We have countless millions nodding on the stalk,"—
We're heirs to a potential wealth the mimes have never
known,

There's eighty feet of Gumbo o'er the rock
There's a recompense for toil
In the dark and fecund soil,
That fills the elevators chuck a block,
That stuffs the ribs of steel
Of the giant ocean keel,
And stacks it mountains high upon the dock

There's a potent power bursting forth from out the
shotten blade,
The mightiest wizard ever yet descried;

The leaping floods are turbinéd tributary to his trade,
To speed the liquid giant far and wide.
He culls the tropic zone,
Makes all forms of wealth his own,
Pearls or gems or silken drapings for the bride,
Oh! the mighty monarch, Wheat,
His dominion is complete,
He's king of earth and ruler of the tide.

His spell has worked a miracle that cannot be denied,
Has built ten thousand cities on the plain;
Has flung the polished parallels along the mountain side,
And linked the distant prairie to the main.
He has nerved the lusty arm
Of the plowman on the farm,
Has infused a bounding life in heart and brain,
He has laid a thousand keels,
And has lined the rails with wheels,
To carry what has built them, honest grain

Winnipeg, the splendid portal to the golden fields afar,
A miracle of energy and might,
Gay with opulence and splendor, wide with welcome
stands ajar,
While her steel ribs sprung like mushrooms in the
night
She's the empress of the plains,
Of unlimited domains,
Which pay their annual dividends at sight,
She's a vitalized colossus,
She is wheat apotheosis,
She's the culmination of Creation's flight.

The ploughshare is the weapon of the twentieth century's strife;

The future's in the hollow of our hand,
Our citizens are buoyant, they're the autocrats of life,
For wheat commands whatever we command
With the whurring of the reaper,
Gold grows cheap as dirt and cheaper,
We hold the world's productions on demand,
As the yellow streams flood thither,
Gold and gems are flowing hither,
"No. 1 Hard" dominates the sea and land.

There are banks like Pharaoh's palaces as splendid and profuse,

Their coffers bulging like the rising sun;
There are huge commercial structures costing millions
lying loose,
Where twenty years ago were less than none.
Since grey Time wound up his watch,
There has never been our match,
Creation stands amazed at what we've done,
We're the newest, we're the best,
We're the greatest, we're the west,
The finest yet, Canadians No. 1

The trune flag that flouts the stars about the prairie sod
Has flown o'er many climates, lands and seas,
Beheld some rare transitions in his empire vast and broad,

But never saw a parallel to these.
So he's sworn an oath or so,
That as long as wheat shall grow,

He'll stake his claim where blows the northern breeze,
 So let Europe take a hunch,
 Or we'll cut the blooming bunch,
And bring our Islands with us, if we please

Of plains as wide as kingdoms we have thousands and
 then some,

 We can place three hundred millions like a dot,
With the Arctic for an icehouse, we can grow the peach
 and plum;

 The world admits that Canada's the spot.
 From the grey Atlantic grand,
 To the blue Pacific strand,

We have tied our sheaf of nations in a knot,
 And for virtue, mind and worth,

 We can trust the solid north
To kill the bacilli of foreign rot.

We're the heirs of a dominion fallowed by the lapse of
 time,

 Its bounty yet is only in the bud,
We have all the raw essentials of a strong creative
 clime,

 A soil to breed the brain and brawn and blood.

 We have mines with nickel teeming,
 We have rocks with silver streaming,
There are riches in the mountains and the flood,
 And tho' all the rest were gone,

 We can cash our draft upon
The endless millions of the prairie mud

So here's a brimming bumper to the soul of Winnipeg,
The sanest, soundest, optimist on earth,
May her faith still soar creative, may her courage
never flag,
The loadstar and the goal of honest worth!
May she spread in circles vast
Till the world has been outclassed,
The heart of hope and industry and mirth,
And may solid rectitude
Make her giant matronhood
Commensurate with her colossal birth!

DEATH

Death, why should whimpering mortals
Shrink from your sombre gates?
Beyond your ebon portals
Our ancient mother waits—
The good hale earth, God love her,
Who garners back her own,
And cures the mental fever
When we lie down alone

No more concept's confusions,
That sere our mortal leaf,
No more of life's delusions,
No more of cureless grief,
Successes nor successions,
Nor fool ambition's crown,
Shall rack us with obsessions
When we at last lie down.

Forgot the glare and glitter,
The fond and futile lies,
The fruit of conquest bitter,
The useless sacrifice,
Rest all the dark deceptions,
The currents false and deep;
No more of Fate's contraptions
When we lie down to sleep.

No more of crime catering
Triumphant thro' the mud,
While honest worth, despairing,
Is shedding tears of blood.
But death, life's splendid chorus,
Shall fend us from the blast,
And lay his mantle o'er us
When we lie down at last.

No more the fool of fashion,
No more the geck of scorn,
No more the slave of passion,
That meanest dog that's born,
But thro' the æons streamless,
With the primeval deeps,
All silent, clean and dreamless,
Sleep as an infant sleeps.

Our element's solution
Shall weary us no more,
Death's process of dilution
These lendings shall restore.

To the great Vast that bore them,
This amalgam of pain,
Its parts—with this that wore them—
Shall be resolved again.

Let humbug make a potter
Of flesh-created skies,
And stack until they totter
Their soft, well-seeming lies,
Who, tortured with the sorrow
Of this creation here,
Would wish an unknown morrow
To wake his sleeping ear

Man built himself a heaven
Forth of his finite mind,
And thinks to him is given
A cycle undefined.
Poor puppet, proud and plastic,
Makes chaos of his deeds,
Till death iconoclastic
Lays him beneath the weeds.

Were it not saner, surer,
To make the most of life?
To make the present purer,
And not a hell of strife?
Forego the silly worship
To self-engendered gods,
And recognize his heirship
To these ancestral clods?

Let sanguine hope defame us
And deal their judgments hard,
Methinks they should not blame us
Who live but for reward,
Know—we have toiled our fairest,
And held our labor cheap,
Have wept above our dearest,
We've suffered and would sleep.

We know the pedant's flourish
Of finite faith that cries,
'Tis only fools who perish
And ignorance that dies.
But faith, and wild erratic,
The sovereign and slave,
The fool and analytic,
Alike sleep in—the grave.

The puzzle of cognition,
That knowless thing, the mind,
Creates its dreams elysian,
As species breed their kind.
Detached conglomerate essays,
From out its mental mire,
Has made a cause and sequence
Of which its self is sire.

Men garble sounds and symbols
In intellectual planes,
But yet for all their gambols
This giant fact remains,—

The good hale earth, God bless her,
Lulls all her sons to sleep,
And never Rome's confessor
Can secret sounder keep

So hail, our ancient mother!
And hail her, herald death!
The woeworn makes no pother
At yielding up his breath.
And into what or whether
His ego may be cast,
He does not reck a feather
When he lies down at last.

ON A SPRAY OF SHAMROCK, 1900

Thus is the tender trefoil sweet,
From Old Hibernia far away;
To-day the Empires celebrate
St. Patrick's natal day

These modest leaves, long wet with tears,
Now rise triumphant from the flood,
And herald a new era's years,
Bedewed with Irish blood.

Not for their nationhood was shed
The blood that vitalized this flow'r,
Long since disunion's hapless head
Succumbed to treacherous pow'r.

But it was poured to show the earth
That over conquest, grief and chains,
Repression, desolation, dearth,
The pride of race remains.

To show the sons of Albion's Isle,
Tho' freedom prompts a courage high,—
That slaves, if bred on Irish soil,
Are proud enough to die.

Ye gallant dead! no drop of blood
From hearts heroic falls in vain,
Your emblem lifted from the mud,
A Queen bids bloom again.

Her Royal act, her Sovereign deed,
Redeems dark centuries of shame,
And rallies to the Empire's need
A million hearts of flame.

Grace conquers where the Tyrant fails,
Proud Erin her adhesion pays,
And with a new elation hails
The dawn of happier days.

Sleep well, ye sacrificial dead!
No marble quarried by a slave
Erects such shaft as marks the head
Of these, the starless brave.

TO THE POLITICAL NOMADS

*ON THE HON JOHN CHARLTON'S UNCOMMISSIONED
MISSION TO WASHINGTON*

Oh! ye who kneel to Washington
In humble adoration,
Whose Lord is Uncle Sam alone,
That Ajax of Creation;
Ye proselytes of schemes unknown,
Where Olney keeps his station,
And proud McKinley comes anon
To scant Canadian ration,
Hear us this day

When Uncle Sam shall kindly grant
Your beggarly petitions,
Altho' 'tis thought Canadians want
Nor trust these raw physicians,
We hope when you shall end your rant,
Your knuckle-downs and hinchung,
This modest favor he'll not scant,
But send his right of lynching
Offhand this day.

Hear this, ye migratory birds,
So fond of southern breezes,
Seek, if ye choose, the flowery swards
Where indolence and ease is.
Flock with the summer-courting hordes,
Nor venture where it freezes,
The hardy native spares his words,
But blows his nose and sneezes
Contempt this day.

Now, faith, ye pliant gentlemen,
Take heed of your position,
Truth has a keen and piercing ken,
And scans the politician
If you should steal advantage then
To soil her high Commission,
She'll pluck your parliamentary hen,
And that with swift precision,
Ere moulting day

'Twas not to sue, and plead, and beg,
We set you on the crupper
Of that abused, but nimble nag,
That flung the jockey Tupper
Firm in the stirrup set your leg,
Ne'er fret about your supper,
At double ditch let cowards flag,
Canuck can cut them upper
And win this day

Your mission, mrs, you have mistook,
We are not begging quarter;
Then why the hell play Jemmy Snook,
And personate the martyr?
To bring you sharply to the book,
Your warrant, right or charter,
To hang this country on the hook,
And hold the same for barter,
Produce this day

These senile mendicants forsooth,
Stand yawping in paresis,
While Sammy, lean, and keen, and smooth,
Does—like a lemon—squeeze us.

But here let Verity and Truth
Propound a saner thesis,
Our Confidant and Giant Youth
Will hit the trail that pleases
Itself this day

LINES FOR THE AUTOGRAPH ALBUM

POETS OF AMERICA

'Tis not in hope of Fame,
Nor for the plaudits of a fleeting day,
Whose circling sun can never know delay,
But sinks to the abyss from whence he rose,
Retracting all his brilliance as he goes—
I give the world my name.

'Tis not for the soft gleam
Of eyes whose glances dark flash thro' the soul—
Those wild emotions which disdain control,
And teach the bursting heart that awful light,
More terrible because so dark its night,
For I have had my dream.

Oh, no! 'tis not for those,
Although they once had been a motive strong,
And were the theme of my now silent song,
The hue of death shall masque the heart that burns,
And thankful am I that one only mourns
Their bright and silent close.

But here my name I give,
For that perchance some broken heart may say
I too have had my dream and saw decay
Creep o'er the vision of my hungry heart,
Why—here is one like me—if but in part,
And I, like he, may live.

VALEDICTORY

We have parted for aye,
We shall wander no more
Down the moonlighted way
As in hours of yore.

We have said our farewell,
Now our paths lie apart,
But the strength of thy spell
Still illumines my heart.

Tho' thy hand, like my own,
To another is tied,
There's no potency known
Can our spirits divide.

O'er the wreckage of years,
And of sorrows so vain,
O'er the rivers of tears,
Still my heart turns again

To the fountain of love,
To the bosom's young shrine,
Still my heart turns to prove
That her pulses are thine.

Thou star of my night,
Of my desolate waste,
May our souls in their flight
Be united at last!

Let us trust, spirit dear,
That, these agonies o'er,
In some happier sphere
We will mingle once more.

TO MARION

As the violets of Spring
From their mosses unfold,
They but misery bring
To my bosom so cold.

In the tender May moon
No delight can I see,
For she parted too soon
My sweet "Peggy" and me.

While the rose but appears,
With her diamonds of dew,
To add passion and tears
To my hunger for you.

And the fruit boughs declined
By the odorous host,
Only bloom to remind
Me of all I have lost.

Nor flowers, nor moonlight,
Nor blossom-clad lea,—
The desert, the night,
And the winter for me.

THE LOSS OF THE "LABRADOR"

She carried us far and well,
From our own to our native shore,
But she lies with a rock in her iron bowels
On the coast of the Skerryvore.
She was clean with a list to the gale,
But she slewed in the mist ashore,
And sixty miles from her charted course
Lies the last of the "Labrador."

In the smoor off the Irish coast,
Where the weeping fogbanks fall,
She donned her shroud while the darkening cloud
Came down like a funeral pall.
"'Tis the light of Instra-hall,"
And away to the north she bore,
But her doom was sealed and she crashed upon
The rocks of the Skerryvore.

Then the wheat from the far North-West
Swished into the hissing brine,
No lack had the Scottish Mermaids then
Of the wherewithal to dine.
And the mails, commerce and love,
Cash cheques and closures sore,
With the appled barrels and tons of cheese
Went down with the "Labrador,"

Her crew were a hundred men,
And "Gussie," he made one,
Her passengers, fourscore or so,
Two hundred, say, all done.
They stood to their place like men,
They were not born for shame,
And first and last they were set ashore,
With their lives and a decent name.

If we feel a thrill of pride
That they did as they should have done,
'Tis half forgot when we call to mind
That the Belfast-built is gone.
She was clean with a list to the gale,
But she slewed in the mist ashore,
And sixty miles off her charted course
Lies the last of the "Labrador"

TO MARION

An August morning, Marion,
Eight darksome years ago,
We wept farewell like children,
Nor knew our depth of woe.
We knew not then the passion,
The unrequited pain,
Or dreamt we, when we sundered,
We ne'er should meet again

The harvest gold, my Marion,
Repay's the sunny toil;
The bob-o-link's careering
His lonesomeness beguile
For us there comes no autumn,
Misfortune's blighting frost
Cut down love's early roses
And laid them with the lost.

Alas! alas! oh, Marion!
To see the opened gram
Wide waving o'er the rolling fields
Recalls that morn again
Restores, alas, too briefly,
The fresh young faith's delight,
It sinks, as dies the sunset,
In bitterness of night

But, oh, remember, Marion,
The winter comes at last,
When we shall slumber, sheltered,
Deep from the icy blast
And let no love lament us
When you and I are gone,
For we had compensation
To know what we were known

Farewell, my graceful Marion!

The eddyings of Fate [^]
Sleep on, on tide's resistance
The fabrics we create
I may have been unworthy,
Or thou, too lovely far,
It needs no divination
To tell what now we are.

O'er thee, my gentle Marion,
Descends the early gloom,
Pathetic wails presaging
Thy swift and certain doom
Alas! sweet drooping lily;
The gods accursed be!
Embellishing their heaven
By robbing us of thee.

Once more, adieu, my Marion!
Dream not of youthful days,
For our dark night can never know
The sparkling morning's rays.
For us befits the midnight,
The thick eye-weighting gloom,
The blind, unwrecking tempest,
The dark and sightless tomb.

TO THE GENTLEMEN WHO HAVE OCCUPIED
THE PAYING TELLER'S WICKET AT OTTAWA

WITH SUCH EXCELLENT RESULTS—FOR THEMSELVES

*"Are you still to learn that the end and perfection
of all our victories is to avoid the vices and infirmities of
those whom we subdue."*—Alexander

All hail, brilliant statesmen! The poet once more
To the treasury benches his homage would pay,
And marvels your precepts, so sacred and hoar,
Were abandoned so soon for the primrosal way.

When you toiled unsuccessful 'twas then you displayed
All morals and virtues that language could name,
But victory transmuted your broom to a spade,
Which is worn to the tread digging graves for your
shame.

What lessons in fine economics you preach!
And Willison dribbles them day after day,
What damnable rubbish these hypocrites screech,
Whose practice is flinging our millions away!

Why any old magnate, with corn in his fist,
Can railroad his schemes over party and press,
They have shown, by a magical turn of the wrist,
They can steal the last rights that the people possess.

Go jingle your tambours to lean Uncle Sam,
And exhibit your ape to log-rolling crew,
All the coppers you'll get you can spit in your palm,
For that egotist huge is as close as a Jew

Yea, it sickens the soul when we call up to mind
How he clamored and whooped for the blood of
our best,
But he first tried his wing on a southern wind,
And pushed the old parrot called Spain from her
nest.

And his victories, gods! how they slop over yet!
Oh the forts he reduced and the niles that he killed!
But Minerva, the blood that was shed would not wet
One sheet in a million that told it was spilled!

And we, must we juggle and laud him forsooth,
And weep Anglo-Saxon and kinship and blood?
By God! there is no getting over the truth,
He would slit the bull's neck of Canuck if he could.

Stay at home. Yea, go burrow yourselves in the earth;
From the light of your promise, go hide you away,
Time never will yield them a record of worth,
Who fail'd to lay hold of the chance of to-day

This country was weary and sore from the smart,
And the pitiful tricks of the Tupperite crew
She planted her blade in their treacherous heart,
And she holds the same weapon to settle with you

Your promised performance she found it a myth,
Economy, pshaw' it was gone in a day,
The oak of your policy shrunk to a withe,
And your statues of brass were the veriest clay

Oh, the Liberal wolves, how they pounced on the spoil!
The lowest canaler himself not secure,
Your precepts, how fragile and easy of soil!
They were bartered and sold like the commonest
whore.

May your motto from Junius stick deep in your throats,
Could he rise from the grave like the wraith that he
was,
He would see sterner tyrants beneath democrats' coats,
Than have ever controll'd the perversion of laws.

P S. TO J. S. W

But since you've abandoned the subsidized mob,
I proffer my friendship's acceptance to you;
And wish the theologist luck in the job,
Whose training perfects the distortionist's view

Like an eel in his tortuous twinings and twists,
Turning shame into honor with logic profound;
But never perceives in his clerical mists
That his belly is always stuck flat to the ground

INCANTATION

Deeply fades the light,
Loud the tempests rave,
Darkly falls the night
On the drifting wave.

Where his nest is stirred
By each thundering shock,
Now the sweeping bird
Seeks his lonely rock.

Who hath sorrow cold,
Let them take a form
Of unearthly mould,
Raving with the storm.

Now from out the tide
Midnight spirits sweep,
Phantom like they glide
O'er the yawning deep.

Thou, mine own beloved,
Spirit like, oh come!
Here my faith is proved;
Still my heart's thy home.

*SUNG BY CHORUS OF INDIAN GIRLS AT
THE BURIAL OF A MAIDEN*

Adieu to thee now!
Thou shalt languish no more,
Full redeemed is thy vow,
And thy sorrows are o'er.

Where the gale leaves the land,
And the blast strides the wave,
Thou art laid by the hand
Of thy love in the grave.

For that fealty of thine,
And thy heart-broken doom,
Still let the dark pine
Sigh its dirge o'er thy tomb.

From the shadows of earth,
And the glimpses of heaven,
From the momentarily birth
Of its woes thou art riven.

From the shackles of clay,
And the struggles of dust,
Thou hast parted away
As the mightiest must.

Adieu to thee now!
Thou shalt languish no more,
Full redeemed is thy vow,
And thy sorrows are o'er.

SONG

Why haunt my dreams, thou vision fair,
When we can love no more?
When I must wake in dark despair,
To know those dreams are o'er.
Why flash on mine that brilliant eye,
Where love no longer gleams?
Or why awake the bursting sigh
O'er those delusive dreams?

Once in my arms thy raven hair
Flowed o'er my kindling cheek,
As pillowed on thy bosom fair,
I heard its transports speak
While thy red lips in warm caress
Thrill'd rapture through my frame,
Now I must weep in vain, alas!
O'er joys I may not name

Oh, love, why art thou careless grown?
Why lovest thou no more?
Must I still seek our vale alone,
Its pleasures to deplore?
Ah! yes, in sorrow I may stray,
Where joy once led me on,
And mourn alone that fleeting day,
And transient glory gone.

*EXTEMPORE ON THE CEMENT MILLS AT
EXSHAW, ALBERTA*

Old Enceladus drew a gentle sigh,
The prairies heaved and mountains pierced the sky,
The rivers plunged through canyon, gorge and chasm,
Roaring obedience to the cataclysm,
Æons crept by, man comes in saucy pride,
And grooves his railway round thy rocky side,
Fly like he works a microscopic change,
And boasts the conquest of the mountain range
At Exshaw he has scaled a tiny part,
To bond together trifles of his art,
His mills are humming through the day and night,
Gleaming like glow-worms with the carbon's light;
His little city great begins to grow,
A kind of corn on thy gigantic toe,
While petty mite he lauds his puny art
In terms so huge they thrill his little heart;—
 Why all his drills and dynamite but rip
A scarce seen scar on thy colossal hip.

TO MARGARET

*"To what dark cave of frozen night
Shall Poor Sylvander hie?
Deprived of thee, his life and light,
The sun of all his joy." —Burns*

The midnight stars are shrouded o'er,
And silence watches lone with me,
While I upon my native shore
Weep this, my last farewell, to thee.

I will not ask thy soul to mourn,
It is enough that one should weep
O'er th' dark tide that cannot turn,
But onward, onward ever sweep.

And in this fleeting moment here,
It were but magnifying grief
To gaze upon the finished year
Where bloomed the rose of love so brief

I will not ask thy memory dear,
Nor dare I crave thee to forget,
For oh, a changeless heart is here,
And more than life I love thee yet!

But in this dark and dreary hour,
When Hope is dead and Joy has flown,
I ask thee to resume the pow'r
Which made my heart at once thine own

And with that power a moment yield
The transport thou wert wont to give,
And I will on this basis build
A lifetime for a moment's love.

Queen of the wreck that was my soul,
Let me once see thy love-lit eye,
That light shall guide me to the pole,
Steel me to live or nerve to die

I may no longer pause, *my love*,
Fate's finger points the certain way,
And e'en I must the doom approve,
'Tis just and, therefore, I obey

But not the justice of her rod
Can reconcile me thus to part,
My *life* is thine, omniscient God,
She knows no peer in this my heart

Oh, for the matchless hours gone,
The madness and the fierce delight,
The eye that was my frenzy's dawn,
Thy lips anticipation's night!

Then oh, this last, this long farewell,
Take 'ere my heart with sorrow breaks!
What woe, what torture can excel
The bitter parting Passion makes?

THE CRIB BUILDERS

*HAVING A CHAT AND INCIDENTALLY A LITTLE DRINK
IN THE HOSTELRY OF AN EVENING*

A health to us, my boys,
The swift, white water men,
We've put Niagara's harness on
To make her toil and spin
So I'll give you lads a toast,
In whiskey, gin or rum,
A health to us and remembrance, while
The wheels of commerce hum

Adown the wild cascade
Where the swirling waters roar,
We built where none will follow, boys,
And none had gone before.
Of course, the world, my lads,
Knows not our face or name,
But we don't care a cent for that,
We built it just the same.

Ah! the British on the Nile
They did a stunt or two,
But for speed and depth, we taught the world
A thing they never knew
In two and twenty feet,
Hurled twenty miles an hour,
We put the groaning timbers down
On the torrent-riven floor

A fig for the engineer!
The contractor—who is he?
Or the walking boss who stands aloft,
And issues his decree?
But here's to the valiant boys,
Long may their honor burn,
Who risk their lives on the foaming front,
That the giant wheels may turn

Oh, ho, the mechanics, nice!
Who cares a jot for them?
They'll come and build their fancy walls
Behind the timber dam.
But we, we are the boys,
With muscle, nerve and blood.
Who shove the wooden bulwarks up
Against the foaming flood

Mankind owes us regard,
And commerce owes it too;
Like God, we made things possible,
Created something new
And for those who come behind,
With tube, and steel, and stone,
We'll have them know, they only come
To reap where we have sown.

Our sweethearts, boys, they know
That the flood is swift and deep;
God bless their souls, it daunts their hearts
To see the white waves leap.

But we—what do we care?—
We'll drink to it once again,
, Tho' its wet and wild, and worth a life,
It's the only job for men.

But we all take off our hats,
Niagara, to you;
The swiftest flood and wildest leap
Thus old world holds to view.
But while we doff to you,
We'll drink a health to them,
The nimble boys, with the valiant hearts,
Who built the Nicholl's Dam

INTRODUCTORY TO POLITICAL PORTRAITS

A legal gentleman, himself an author, (some years since) asked the writer to try a review of the Canadian House of Commons. The request was long neglected, and when the attempt was made, its colossal proportions saved many a worthless head. The amount and quality of the subject-matter gave the writer pause, while the method and style of treatment might well puzzle the invention of a more fertile wit than Nature bestowed upon the writer of these lines.

Whether to write as a clown, and laugh, as a cynic, and smile, as a stoic, and disregard, as a prophet, and denounce, as a philosopher and analyze, as a humanist, and pity, as a satirist, and flay, or whether to touch the reprobates at all, (and doubtless this last would have been carried by a vote in the Parliamentary caucus, had the decision rested with them) were points mooted by many sound and able friends. However, poets are nothing if not original, and the author decided to write simply as a plain and unbiassed historian. In this character there was less scope for imagination and creation, but the want of these, it was presumed, would be compensated by common, unadorned historical fact. The author, in deciding thus, further determined that since the creative muse was to be eliminated, that even the terms in which he spoke of these gentlemen should be those only which they themselves use in speaking of each other, and the reader will please note that every adjective, every qualifying phrase, every noun, such as thief, liar, robber, cheat, plunderer, grafter, knave,

libertine, etc., are drawn from the epithets in common use and currency among the combatants who dazzle the electorate with political illusions.

For the want of taste and good manners, therefore, displayed in the use of these coarse and vulgar (though truthful) terms, the candid reader will doubtless absolve the author and lay the blame where it properly belongs, with the Honorable Gentlemen of the House of Commons of Canada

As the author has already, to some extent, taken the reader into his confidence, he now proposes to do so wholly, and that the student may understand the apparent discrepancy in the status and power of the Honorable Gentlemen herein mentioned, some being, as it were (in plain simile), mere sewer rats, or political scavengers, and others, again, eminent in many walks of vice and licentiousness, others, still, gentlemen of merit and virtue, with nothing except perhaps incompetence to be laid to their charge—outside of association with and toleration of the theft and effrontery of their henchmen, he proceeds to tell him or her how the names were chosen

The task of review, as aforesaid, appearing so tremendous, all the names, gentle and simple, unknown or celebrated, Dominion or local, were placed in a ballot box, and several friends had the privilege of drawing three or four each, and these so drawn were the names to be reviewed, the remainder were lost (for the present at least) to fame. An additional privilege enjoyed by the drawers was one occasionally in vogue in close constituencies, namely, that if they thought a name drawn unfit for publication, or if they were partisan or

jealous of his reputation, they might eat it, and so by a process of destruction, as it were, save him. Several owe their omission to this procedure. One drawer, a M. D'Ancy, in a moment of abstraction, ate four. It was claimed by the other drawers that this abnormal appetite should not eliminate his friends, so the author, as a compromise, agreed to simply give the names destroyed. They were these: Messrs McGonigle, Farrow, Chocolate and Fitzboddler. M. D'Ancy's capacity as an incinerator, however, lifted a load from the author's young mind, he fearing greatly his inability to do justice to this quartette, three of whom he personally knew. Another drawer attempted to swallow a name, but it lodged in his throat, and he was fain to cough it up, whereupon he admitted his corn and *Atolycus* appears. A second dispute arose, some claiming that effort should be accounted performance, others saying that the introduction of this poltroon would deface the history, while one philosopher asserted that he was worthy of being catalogued if it were only for his own opinion of himself. The argument that finally prevailed was, that dogs are occasionally seen elsewhere than in their own kennel and that if admitted to company above his merit, it was not the first cur that was out of place. The historian, or author, accepted this dictum, but thought that his work should have been confined to politicians, and objected seriously to the names of several newspaper men whom he thought not fit, or, rather, too decent to associate with the above gentlemen. Finally a youth in the party hunted cowardice and fear of brother scribblers, so the historian said no more, but accepted his task. An acrimonious discussion was now

precipitated, anent qualifications of many Canadian politicians or newspaper men to occupy places in a permanent work of the kind proposed, some claiming, and with apt proof, that the reputation of not more than ten would outlive themselves a year, that the great majority of them had already survived their reputations and that many others, if to be written of at all, should be confined solely to the prison records. It was further argued that to fill a work aiming at permanency, with unknown, or practically unknown, names, was to court oblivion for the volume itself and, besides, many of the honorable gentlemen were unworthy of celebration, they being not only not clever, but even their vices, like their brains, small and contemptible, such as petty theft, knavery and fraud, and such other mean characteristics as were, until the election of these scions of mendacity, supposed to be the sole possession of dirty and necessitous democracy. It was, however, asserted that some of our political parvenus were seized with more aristocratic crimes, viz., appropriation of public funds, of public lands, and of private wives, and that these latter were not to be degraded by being classed with the hungry wretch who stole a loaf or took a five dollar bribe, or paid her her fee to a woman of sale. These arguments were doubtless well founded, but it was pointed out that the reader could not look for greater characters than the country possessed, and that if anything at all were to be written, the materials at hand, however wretched must be employed.

Again it was said that we had in Canadian public life a few men whose talents and virtues were very great, worthy of the best traditions and ideals of the

race. Thus, too, all were ready to admit, but fortunately for the uniformity of this history, only a few of them were drawn, this lottery exemplifying in a manner the analogous distinctions of fate, that the solid, virtuous and able are often less prominent than the frivolous, vicious and incompetent. However, fortune was faithful to a few of her great proteges, and their portraits are hereto appended, not in very good society, we admit, but yet in company to which they elect or are elected.

In conclusion, the author wishes to say that some twenty names (more or less) so rank that they could not at present be published without offence, are now in a process of sterilization and may, if their odor becomes less like that of a Winnipeg sewer, appear in our next edition.

Finally if any honorable gentleman thinks himself in correctly portrayed we will take his own favorite picture and the one preferred by his political opponent, and we doubt not but with the artistic skill which we so eminently possess, to strike a happy medium, that will be not only applauded to the echo, but applauded so heartily that echo will betake herself to an institution for the deaf and dumb.

The author now begs permission to retire and take a Turkish bath, after which he proposes, if allowed, to attend a course of lectures by Mr. Edwards, on Ruskin's "Ethics of the Dust," a procedure immortalized by Messrs. Sifton, Emmerson, Borden, Hyman, *et al.* and others of the inoculated or initiated, and said to be the great and only restorative and purifier for the human mind after pollution by political virus.

POLITICAL PORTRAITS

'Tis said that Satire long since lost her force
To hold Corruption a half decent course,
That Vice no more regards her trenchant pen
Than Satan recks the platitudes of men,
That modern Statesmen care no more for shame
Than does a mongrel dog from whence it came.

Grim Satire then has reached her utmost scope,
Her light extinguished and eclipsed with Pope,
Or haply strays beside the quiet urns
Of brilliant Byron and of caustic Burns,
Or stops to muse o'er the neglected spot
Where Churchill slumbers, like his wit, forgot

Then Satire, hence, no more the guest of fame,
You lost your force when rascals lost their shame,
Go find your haunt on some more modest shore,
The English-speaking world is yours no more

There was a day when your indignant light
Exposed to public gaze the ghouls of night,
When 'twas no blot upon a poet's pride
To raise a blister on the calloused hide
To whip the vicious to their filthy pit,
Like reptiles, squirming 'neath the lash of wit

That day has gone, the public mind, at ease,
Festers, unconscious of its own disease,
Contented apathy indifferent lies,
A stomach merely without brains or eyes,
A type's reversion, to whose sordid sense
Honor and fame have lost significance

The rhymers now who dares a caustic word,
Is deemed unskilful, foolish and absurd,
The road to lunch is flatter, laud, and praise,
Commend the thief, he's wealthy and he pays,
Confine your genius to laudation's page,
A supple son of degradation's age.

Satire needs must, when Satan drives, farewell,
Come to my arms, ye proteges of Hell,—
Ye jocund pirates of the golden stream,
Ye sons of mammon, sordid and supreme,
The bard no more in irritating verse
Reproves the license of your vicious course,
But all apostate to his ancient creeds
Is hence confined to illustrate your deeds,
Not like a Nemesis of wrath and hate,
But an historian, tranquil and sedate,
Suppress, eliminate, nor amplify,
But paint each portrait as it meets the eye.

In ancient days the poet gingered up
By quaffing deep the Helliconian cup,
Till drunk or raptured with ambrosial booze
He sputtered worship to a heathen muse,
Who condescendingly appeared and pressed
The maudlin bard to her inspiring breast,
And weeping on his brow poetic tears,
Filled him with eloquence up to his ears.

No scribbler now implores an heathen-punk,
Back to the scrap heap with such ancient junk
Dazed with the dope of growler, glass or mug,
In terms generic of the thief and thug,

The modern Botcher butchers up his trash,
And garlic-seasoned vends his rhyming hash,
Mysterious compound, whose component parts
Sets method mad and travesties the arts.

For us, we will not try the ancient way,
And we abhor the manners of to-day,
So let mere metered common-sense prevail
O'er our historic, "round, unvarnished tale "

PORTRAIT No. 1.



Who is this stricken shade that tries to guard
His features from us? This is Abelard.

THE GHOST OF ABELARD RISES

This figure his eyes filled with tears, walketh backward led by a female shade who tries to comfort and encourage him he breaks into lamentations and descends

Abelard, venom'd with a cureless wound,
No caustic ere again shall render sound,
Far south he nurses in a silent woe
The canker whence his life and honors flow
His office long lay open, to be sure,
In hope that time and rest would work a cure,
But help was none, his nervousness remained,
And vulture eaten, lies Prometheus chained

That sombre malady that turns the mind
Back on its darkened self, holds him confined,
To warped cognition's hell, where thought surveys
Scenes, terror-wreathed in a refracted maze,

In vain mentality would grasp control,
Delusions baseless fill the conscious soul
Gloom worse than death shrouds up the trembling day,
And horror-filled night's æons drag away
'Tis profanation of the sense to smile,
Or lend approval to abstraction's wile.

Insane, no doubt, yet sane enough to dread
Complete destruction of the ruined head

Our flatterers tell us that this pleasant state
Is a component of the truly great,
That genius wanders on the dizzy verge,
Ready to plunge into the maddened surge,
Just as distraction at Niagara Falls
Leaps when the spirit of the torrent calls.
'Tis very plausible, polite and nice.
But we believe 'tis the result of vice;
And yet so pitiful such wrecked career,
That Satire, if she dared, would drop a tear

PORTRAIT No. 2



Out from the chaos of the Ballot Box
Clothed hastily in underwear and sox

THE SHADE OF CLODIUS RISES

*The apparition dishevelled—trembling carries, right,
a petticoat left, an empty portfolio the clasp thereof
Two Trees a Poplar and Tamarac cunningly en-
twined he grasps a money bag and hurriedly descends*

'Tis whispered, Clodius, you can not be stung;
Your head, then, like your heart, is made of dung
I will not try, 'tis worth no rhymers' while
To beg the Sphinx for a colossal smile—
Fit type of ruin and destruction too.
As bloodless, cold and meaningless, as you.

You were a star of minor magnitude,
With some reflective light adorned, endowed,

When first your beams illumed the Western plain
Men did not deem their adoration vain
But the dead planet self obscured your light,
And now you circle in successless night,
Stripped of your promise, left your transient fame,
Aimless, perhaps, you never had an aim,
Unless to be a prince of Pluto styled,—
The poorest goal for which man ever toiled
Clodius, we have no animus for you,
Reflection sorrows for the parvenu,
The once keen appetites, by wealth destroyed,
Shun newer feasts that cannot be enjoyed.
Haply you may desert your purchased seat,
And find with contemplation calm retreat
There with the soul deep solitude bestows,
Find tragic sorrows in the fading rose,
Or quench the parching drouth of arid years
Deep in the violet's pellucid tears
There, moralizing on the human plan,
On fragile womanhood and erring man,
Warn the untutored Bride commencing life
How snares are spread for the unwary wife
Tell her how oft man's noblest type has wrecked
The husband's, wife's, the world's, his own respect,
Paint after this the suicidal grave,
The leering, canting, villifying slave,
The innuendo, vile comments and jeers,
Her stricken parents and her husband's tears;
The desolation whence is no resource,
The voiceless grief of agonized remorse.
Thus you might do in philosophic mood,
I say you *might*—let others say you *should*.

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PORTRAIT No. 3.



Up from his native filth—despised, corrupted,
Behold a shade, a closet for his crest!

*The ghost of Sporty rises crest as aforesaid he
plays upon a pranelle—a figure in the background passes
a tambourine he clutches the cash a sewer opens and
he descends*

Sporty, the sewer rat, the game you played
Stamps you an expert at your dirty trade,
And justifies the knaves who claim you hid,
Holding your honor for the highest bid.

Immortal gods, are these and things like these,
The immoral hinges of our destinies?

R

Are we so permeate with vice and crime,
As fertilize our honors deep in slime?
Are we so callous, mongrel, misbegot
As deem a god spawned from such moral rot?
If so, misanthropy beneath his frown
Can warp a smile to see the world 'rush down "

* * *

PORTRAIT No. 4.



Well-mounted gallant, like a knight of old,
Rises a warrior never bought or sold.

*The shade of Don Quixote rises armed like an errant
the giant Monopoly appears he challenges him to
mortal combat he strikes a hand from the monster
they rest. The battle is resumed and, fighting, they
descend.*

Worthy of honor, noble Scottish Thane,
Slave to no clique and always sound and sane,
With firmness worthy of a wider scope,
Batting for victory with a forlorn hope.
Long may you rouse us with your clarion call,
Resolved on right no matter what befall,
Fling down your gage to Pluto and his spy,
Unsoiled battle and unblemished die.

It warms the Patriot that there still remains
One statesman free from corporative chains,
Whose guide and motto is not, will it pay?
But speaks his honest thought let come what may,
Bond to no sect, nor to his party slave,
But Whig or Tory calls a thief a knave,
And thinks no rascal has the power absurd
To change the meaning of one English word
Long may you tower deep founded o'er the storm,
And swirling welter of the changing swarm.

PORTRAIT No. 5



Helpless and useless, innocent ill-star'd,
Comes one defeated, worn and battle-scar'd

*The shade of Lepidus rises the figure bears a sieve
into which it sheds tears it fills not, whereat he seems
amazed enter sombre spirits of Distraktion they carry
him in chiara obscura away*

Lepidus, leader of dissentient bands,
A small Dewet, with smaller head and hands,
We like, admire, your passiveness and pluck
But really, Lepi, don't you think you're stuck,
Or stung, or strung?—we leave the term to you,
You're on the inside, tell us which will do.

We have no quarrel with you, but thus we say
You are the victim of divided sway;

A stronger hand and clearer vision must
Consign these cabals to generic dust,
Chaotic counsels back to chaos sweep,
And Riot spurn to her primeval deep,
And shorn the expedients of the doubtful hour,
Subscribe to order the creative power
This must be done, and shall be done no less
Ere you or your successor find success.

Methinks if honest thought might speak a word,
That you are plainly a domestic bird,
Such as the housewife cherishes from harm
In the staid limits of a country farm.
You were not winged to soar the eagle's flight,
Or gaze undazzled on the noonday light,
Or rear your eyrie on th' abysmal verge
Of beetling cliffs that overhang the surge.
The plains for yours, and little sedgy bogs,
Where watercresses shade the spawning frogs,
And odorous cedars spread above the pool,
Drinking the waters that their shadows cool,
There you can sputter, flutter, splurge and cluck,
And quack the themes that interest a duck.

PORTRAIT No 6



Comes in a habit foreign to its taste
A recalcitrant huge and triple-faced

*The shade of Boswell rises he carries a Biographical
Volume he attempts to bury it it will not down
he tries to flee, but each face contends for its separate
way he finds progression nil and descends*

Cato, the Censor, cornered once, defined
As fool the man who never changed his mind,
And later experts in defection claim
Ass and Conservative to mean the same.

The student aims, by a generic rule,
To prove a fool an ass, an ass a fool,
Hence a complex idea fills the mind—
Conservative an ass and fool combined
Such specious reasoning brings us to this pass—
Remain a Whig or you become an ass,
Or born a donkey, by this wondrous rule,
Cease being an ass and you remain a fool,
Or if Conservative, why, then, alas,
You are, great heavens, Tory, fool and ass!
The Whig, unchanging by this plastic rule,
Becomes a Tory by remaining fool,
And is, -let wisdom readjust her wig,—
A Tory, fool and ass, and yet a Whig.

Why this long prologue in a foolish vein
These petty quibbles of an idle brain?
Merely a problem in its modes combined,
To fit with Boswell's scientific mind
We wish to ask him for his points of view
On one great subject, both his old and new
First, being a scholar, he will not deny
Cato was right and give himself the lie,
And this admitted, how does Numa class
In the conception of a Tory ass?
Thence if he not disproves the student's rule,
How looks Pompilius to a Whiggish fool?
Third, what the impressions on his complex mind
When Whig, fool, ass and Tory are combined?

PORTRAIT No. 7



Grasping a Bible, brandishing a sword,
A potent figure steps upon the board

The shade of Hector rises he seats himself on a huge globe a splendid river with wooded shores thereon wild birds beautiful and of divers kinds aquatic and arboreal brooding and at play the book and sword fall into the stream he seizes a wild fowl with a quill thereof and the blood therefrom he makes voluminous notes on a birch scroll he is magically transformed into a swan he essays a voyage for the discovery of Leda and disappears

You valiant Hector, champion of a cause
Where honor dwells not, and is no applause,
You once ordained a proselyte of truth,
Where are the gods of your unsullied youth?

Was it for you, an acolyte of Christ,
 To hold with money-changers doubtful tryst?
 And sink the status of a reverend name,
 Supporting men beneath contempt and shame?
 Where was your wisdom? -'neath religion's skies
 There is no room for mortal enmities,
 Peace and good-will guard her dominions broad,
 The guides of Enoch when he walked with God
 There concord dwells, and love creates again
 The Christian's hope, the brotherhood of men
 These are far hence —methinks the flowers of faith
 Bloom sparse along contention's arid path,
 Where charity beholds her fragile plants
 Crushed 'neath the feet of vicious combatants,
 Where virtue, mercy, justice, all are lost,
 Ground in the dust by the remorseless host
 'Church Militant' —at best a dubious word—
 Religion derogates that draws a sword,
 Force is a Samson, muscular and blind,
 And void of reason dominates no mind,
 Tenets are taught, a club is not abstruse,
 But, pshaw! you know all this, so what's the use?
 Leave your polemics, lure us up the stream
 Where wild birds nestle, procreate and gleam;
 Their lives illumined by a quill more rare
 Than ever decked a habitant of air
 There we will stray, a pupil at your call,
 And list instruction that may well enthral
 Notes more divine than rhymers ever sings,
 Sweep rhythmic-cadenced from the wild birds' wings.
 Deep in the shadows of the solemn woods,
 Soft Nature woos us in communing moods,

Weaving her fetters with a mystic art,
Pulsating deep from her primeval heart.

There in a realm devoid of sects and mobs,
Farces and franchise, dirty grafts and jobs,
Study a lore that renovates the mind,
And half restores a faith in humankind.

PORTRAIT No. 8



With eagle beak and patriarchal beard,
A giant comes, but, lo, his walls are pared!

The shade of Cato rises accompanied by a Numidian lion, blind and toothless limping sorely a band of snarling wolves surround them the lion tries to roar, but fails enter commiserating spirits, who carry out Cato and the lion the wolves fall on each other and descend.

Cato, deserving of a wider fame,
Staunch to his cause, in principle and name
Like Nestor, sits neglected and alone,
Discarded Titan of an age that's gone
Stunned and dismayed, beholds, yet scarce believes,

This swift succession of a thousand thieves,
And in the haze of this, his failing hour,
Half deems the Tones are restored to power

Poor weary giant, o'er his twilight lies
The sombre wrecks of ideal prophecies,
While vaunted virtues of Mackenzie's days
Spread shapeless ruin to his darkening gaze.
Whelm'd in a torrent that he could not stem,
Futile alike to warn or to condemn,
The staunch old heart leaps in its waning fires,
With a proud protest that the world admires

PORTRAIT [No. 9]



What's he who calls I am betrayed, betrayed,
While echo answers sold, but yet unpaid?

The shade of Laud rises consuming Cowan's chocolates he carries a huge bust of Echo and an empty pocket-book over which he weeps and descends

Laud, in his printing parlious by the creek,
The scarce-heard thunderer of his once-a-week,
Sits aping old Aristides the Just,
Blowing his small importance till it bust,
Yet tries a moment thro' his henchman, Breault,
To bleed a turnip for a *quid pro quo*.
Collection needed for the Cowan fund,
Poor petty heeler of the grafter-bund.

PORTRAIT No. 10.



Who next appears?—here comes a modest shade
Strolling in P.O. uniform arrayed.

*The shade of Nameless rises, clothed as indicated
he bears divers small bannerets in the manner of a Bengough caricature he smiles ineffably and reads the legends thereon—Peace Rest Riddance Joy To the woods Cut the Bunch etc., and evaporates*

This Nameless One eventually succeeds,
And gets the job that he deserves and needs,
Long for the grafting clique pulled little pulls,
A weary toiler for a bunch of fools.

Above the uncongenial part he played,
Becomes P M and slips into the shade

PORTRAIT No 11



(Firm mid the ruin of his grand ideals
An honored shade of noble aspect stalks)

The shade of Numa Pompilius rises crowned with a myrtle wreath carrying an olive branch behind a grafter leading an ass laden with gold he is surrounded by a multitude of opportunists and importunists they beg alms he distributes generous largesse some carry away the ass's panniers others steal Numa's wreath and wand he gives them his gown, smiling benignly they depart tearing the robe. the figure of Numa slowly fades.

Of you, proud Numa, able, clean and brave,
"Fallen in the practice of a cursed slave,"
Or slaves, or knaves, take any hated word,
'Tis fit to nominate your plundering horde
"What shall be said of you?" Well, this we say
"Expedience ends not with its dubious day,

"It will but skin and film the ulcerous part,
While rank corruption festers at the heart
You know, we all know, but forget, forsooth,
There's no compromise with eternal truth,
That temporizing is a fool's resort
Where vices throng like courtiers at a court,
That crime's and virtue's qualities are quite
Distinct, and opposite as dark and light,
And he's a crude philosopher, my friend,
Opposing principles would try to blend.

We think your art of trucking to the times,
Small men have made excuse for greater crimes.
Wresting your modes to spiritual ends
Into a means to help themselves and friends
Where you beheld ideal glories shine,
They only saw cash, currency, and coin.

We know the formulas of canting fools,
Their plastic maxims and elastic rules
"The needs of periods, temper of the day,
Mob's effervescence, ignorance of clay,
The heritage of classes and the claims
Of sections endless with divergent aims."

Mere platitudes of politicians these,
Excuse to juggle empty sophistries¹
It needs no prophet with inspired tongue
To prove that right can never spring from wrong.
But men brave, Numa, and you're one of these,
Oft barter future for a present ease,
And statesmen, too, for plaudits of an hour,
Exchange eternal for a transient power,
Building unthinking o'er the hollow deep,
Where coming whirlwinds of destruction sleep.

And yet 'tis said, felt, known by every one,
Numa is our Dominion's greatest son,
And let us add our quota to your fame
We hold you bearer of a spotless name
In the wild welter of the pilfering crew,
Nor friend nor foe, imputed wrong to you,
While rabid virulence itself ne'er said
You reaped, save shame, from the vile mob you led
And pity 'tis your uncongenial fate
Has made you sponsor for the things you hate,
Forced you to shelter, with ambiguous art,
Measures and men abhorrent to your heart.
Those dexterous parryings to shield a friend,
Unworthy you and useless in the end,
Have dimm'd the lustre of a splendid name,
That long will echo down the halls of fame

PORTRAIT No. 12.



Here comes putrescence, round his trident curled
The jocund ruler of corruption's world

The shade of Neptune rises he leads a school of mormuckers each with a basket of odorous fish his trident magically becomes a scoopnet filled with Canadian coin the mormuckers scramble therefor they pelt each other with rotten fish hell yawns and they descend

Democracy, the turbulent, the vile,
The scourge that wears fair freedom's brilliant smile,
Seeking an incarnation of her kind—
A species vicious, villainous and blind,
Petty and vapid, faithless, soulless, skamm'd,
Immoral, thieving, libertine and damned,
Ceased from her quest at sight of Neptune's mob,
Crying "Eureka," these will do the job
Neptune, manipulator of manne,
Wades in a nastier Empire than has been,
Knee-deep in offal, fly-blown, putrid, push,

His trident redolent with stinking fish,
Wallows complacent in the dirtiest spawn
That gods or men have ever gazed upon
Futile alike declensions or degrees,
You stink, they stink, the next stink worse than these,
Succeeding shoals exceed in rank excess,
Super-superlative of rottenness.
Heavens, what a mess! themselves themselves excel,
Surpassed nor equalled in nor out of hell!
Satire disgusted, dips her pen in hate
And hands it to the muse of Billingsgate.

PORTRAIT No. 13.



Yes is it thou thou blatant demagogue.
Thou bipedation of the self-blown frog?

*The shade of Titus Annius rises attended by the
demons Disorder, Egotism, and their trains a dance
the mob place on his head a wooden crown he plays
the Marseillaise on the calliope and explodes all vanish.*

Loud Titus Annius, here's a line for you,
Crude demagogue with the provincial view,
Of tempests in a teapot you have heard,
And pickle herring tragedies absurd
Doubtless you catch the moral, sir, don't deem
Creation starts at your escaping steam,
Please place on your exuberance a check,
We've other provinces besides Quebec

PORTRAIT No. 14.



Snub-nosed, long-haired with button-hole bouquet
And yet a genius, "take the foot away"

The ghost of Blackstone rises clad in a toga, crimson smeared director's slit...he spews forth a volume of municipal statutes he orates a moment drinks a quart of Seagram's and descends

Blackstone, the orator from Huron's shores,
Expert on statutes, bonuses and boors,
A man of genius, various and profuse,
And great alike in rhetoric and booze.
Seagram or Cato, Hennessey or Burke,
The Legislature, the saloon, or kirk,
Drunk or debauching, preaching or pretence,
He speaks or prays or vomits eloquence.

Alas, poor erring soul, what stars are thine!
The lax possessor of a gift divine,

Flinging your god-like talent to the mob,
To hold a thankless seat and petty job,
Wisdom may seek a reason high and low,
But Fate replies, the gods would have it so.

PORTRAIT No. 16



Call forth the next, a thin and bloodless form,
Consuming virioli, striving to keep warm

*The wrath of Thersites rises clad in a forester's
lincoln green doublet, carrying, right, a sheaf of land tiles
left, a banneret with a strange legend thereon "No
alienation of public or private property" he drinks
from an inverted foolscap shrinks perspectively and
disappears*

Thersites, long discredited, essays
To rehabilitate his dying blaze,
Acknowledged once to be a man of wit,
Plays to the gods where once he played the pit,
And vainly struggles with his flickering light
A portent sure of swiftly coming night.

There was a day when his unsullied name
Was deemed the protege of future Fame;
When patriot men believed they saw defined
A brilliant future for his brilliant mind.
Proud of his pungent wit, incisive force,
His mental energy and broad resource,
His clear directness and explicit thought,
They hailed him as the man the country sought

Now all is changed, men wear a cynic's smile
When Thersites assumes his ancient style,
And call to mind the "nest of traitors" who
Themselves their leaders and their party slew,
The all-ambitious clique, whose vicious breed
Would not be led, and neither could they lead
"Dead issues," say you, aye, and men have grown
Indifferent to the actors now unknown
Or if recalled grey echo cries direct,
"Thersites, branded long ago, suspect."

PORTRAIT No. 16



Who comes? A worshipper of foreign pelf
Gnawing the crust for which he sold himself

*The shade of Arnold arises the features hidden
on his skull, a black cap perched thereon an eagle
grasping a scroll bearing the word Dominion, in its
beak a maple leaf it drives its talons into the skull of
Arnold and they descend*

A line for Arnold, one of the abhorred
And fawning sycophants of Dana's board,
Those hungry villains of all virtues shriven,
To whom a meal was Honor, Land and Heaven
Nor French, nor Briton, a base mongrel born,
And worthy only cold Canadian scorn,
Build him a tomb, aye, deep enough designed
To hide all traitors of the rascal's kind,
And thus the epitaph to grave thereon,
"Here rot the last of annexation's spawn!"

PORTRAIT No. 17.



A guy Aspasia clinging to each arm.
Here comes the manager of Cupid's farm.

The ghost of Antinous rises, surrounded by diaphanously-clad females they crown him with chaplets of passion flowers they offer him wine he expostulates they dance—drunkenly a porter appears and they form a funeral procession and carry him out sad music.

Lol old Antinous, the senile scamp,
Sneaks through the night to many a musty ramp;
Or to some grand hotel, conducts his —
Unless the porter rudely shows the door
A trifle thus, it only veers his course

And shews a statesman's marvellous resource.
"Indisposition sudden" flies afar,
Lugging Aspasia in his private car,
And as the wheels beneath him pitch and swerve,
His morals tumble down at every curve.

"A brief occasion to restore the brain,
Shaken with b-ooze and parliamentary strain,
A modest fortnight by the sounding shore,
And he'll return as brilliant as of yore"
So the despatch; the wretch comes sneaking back
A jaded, worn, emasculated wreck.
This time 'Our Own,' forgetting his fatigues,
Prompt at the summons of his wise colleagues,
His arduous duties are assumed again,
Ere he had quite recovered from the strain,
Still his physicians hope 'tis splendid stuff,
And sounds like what it is—space-filling guff

Yet he possesses, reckless what befalls,
A mental appetite that never palls,
One is a trifle for this valiant nip
Of ladies, sometimes two adorn his trip
Swell entertainment, in luxurious ease,
With all the inducements to be pleased and please,
Couched in their flying harem, lulled to rest,
The C M blesses and is doubly blessed.
The charming devotees in rapture blend,
Embrace each other and embrace their friend,
In adoration of the statesman join
Their stockings, filled with good Canadian coin

These are the men who pilot us to fame,
Go, my compatriots, bide your heads in shame,
Or if too dense to blush, then sordid know
These swell Delilahs cost a bunch of dough!

PORTRAIT No. 18



Like to the drunken god upon his ass,
Comes the scarred hero of a certain class.

*The shade of Bacchus rises the figure mounted as
aforesaid he carrieth, right, a cannon, left, a bottle of
caustic he falleth from his ass the cannon dischargeth
a bevy of flower crowned nymphs the caustic burneth
him, the nymphs laugh thereat they annoint him plen-
tifully with perfume, take him in their arms and descend.*

The amorous Bacchus, whose chivalric mind
Dooms war to man, but love to womankind,
The foul old devotee, whose putrid rites
Lead him a vicious dance through sordid nights,
And well he knows, like military lord,
That female hearts have ever loved a sword,
And proudly draws his blade at Venus' shrine
And thunders, "Love me and the world is mine!"

Still it is patent that this ancient brave
Bears deeper wounds than ever yet he gave,
That 'tis not duty only which insures
His strict attention to the surgeon's stores.
But then the medical department must
Crack little jokes to rub away the rust.

By the immortal gods, we should not laugh!
Away with laughter, subterfuge and chaff!
The man is such a lecherous, vicious slave
That his salvation only is the grave,
There is the surgeon for the putrid sot,
Within the tomb men have the right to rot.
Upon this soil, where virtue still survives,
Why should we tolerate these stinking lives,
Load them with honor, places, wealth and fame,
And in return reap only endless shame?
What have we done to merit such a fate?
Virtue's our own, and every true heart's hate.

PORTRAIT No. 19

Each foot triumphant on a bleeding core,
Absolved by a commission above the worse

*The ghost of Fidius rises draped in cloth of gold he
stands as indicated he questions the dead bodies
they reply not enter certain venerable figures in black
gowns they cover Fidius' cloth of gold with a white robe
and depart the shade descends*

Fidius, another of the enthralling scene,
Fikthy so long he thinks his hands are clean,
Needs no commission with conjuring tricks
T' absolve the mountebank of politics,
Like Duncan's guards, the guilty ones are dead,
So perish all who have their trust betrayed
But Fidius, pshaw! the dog, 'tis manifest,
Is spotless. Heavens, man, we did but jest!
'Tis gross abuse to say "he cinched the stuff",
Those rank Conservatives were always rough,
Nor hesitate to soil the good man's name,
Themselves immoral, think that he's the same,
Yet 'twas a hundred thousand' more indeed!
Let the dead answer at their utmost need
They speak not, Fidius, do they buy and sell
A Boodler's Railway Terminus in hell?

PORTRAIT No 20.



Pimpled and spectacled with red-rimmed eyes.
Behold the meanest of the bunch arise!

THE WRAITH OF ATOLYCUS RISES

*This figure, crowned with snakes an hungry he
attempts to eat one a second figure proffers food Atolycus
eats thereof he looseth the snake which biteth
the giver, who dies Atolycus danceth a crescendo and
descends*

Atolycus long waited, and was paid
A few poor thousands for his dirty trade,
And strayed, a maveric to the western plains,
Discharges vitriol from his acrid veins,
Falls foul of Teddy, with his canting rot,
The kettle shrieking negro at the pot,

A scene for gods and men, O drivelling Dick,
The puny puppet of a petty clique,
What desperate toils to get enough to eat,
And very often very nearly beat!

I know you, sir, none better, you're a cad,
As foul a birth as time has ever had;
You sold yourself, your party and your friends,
For what? to serve a recalcitrant's ends
In policy, in party and in trade,
You crawled out of every deal you made,
Into your kennel, dog, you'll die there soon,
As mean a whelp as ever bayed the moon

EPILOGUE

Were it not better that, correct and wise,
We clothed our progress in a humane guise?
Conformed to sympathy and common-sense,
Beneficence instead of opulence?

What is our wealth, if sacrificial graves
Enrich a soil to pamper gilded knaves,
Enabling vice to triumph o'er the laws
And buy the verdict for her sordid cause?
Where is our glory, if the weak and poor
From cold and hunger are not made secure?
Will greatness warm the toilers' fireless shed,
Or compensate him for the want of bread?

We do not mean to make the maw a god,
Or quit one scruple of a needed load,
But modest worth enjoys a slice of meat,
And even a patriot must have food to eat
The law should be that high nor low shall shirk,
Nor able man shall eat unless he work.

Poor penury, in social thralldom set,
Born to a huge inheritance of debt,
Staggers beneath his load till life is gone,
Then leaves it to his sons to struggle on,
While drones, descended from a wealthy knave,
Own them as sure as ever master slave,
Makes him the servant of his lust and will,
And cannot even plead the right of skill—
Which right itself is but specious plea,
A gift of Nature, not an equity.

Men are presumed as equal in their rights,
But even a fool admits unequal might,
And strength has always laid its load and scorn
On the bowed shoulders of the brainless born

But truce, of all the hateful tasks of time,
Tis stringing platitudes of truth in rhyme
To make a truism in verse taste high,
Drape in a half exaggerated lie
Trim it in mystery and euphonious sound,
Then the omniscient world exclaims, profound,
Places the volume on its dusty shelf
And deems it almost deep as is herself

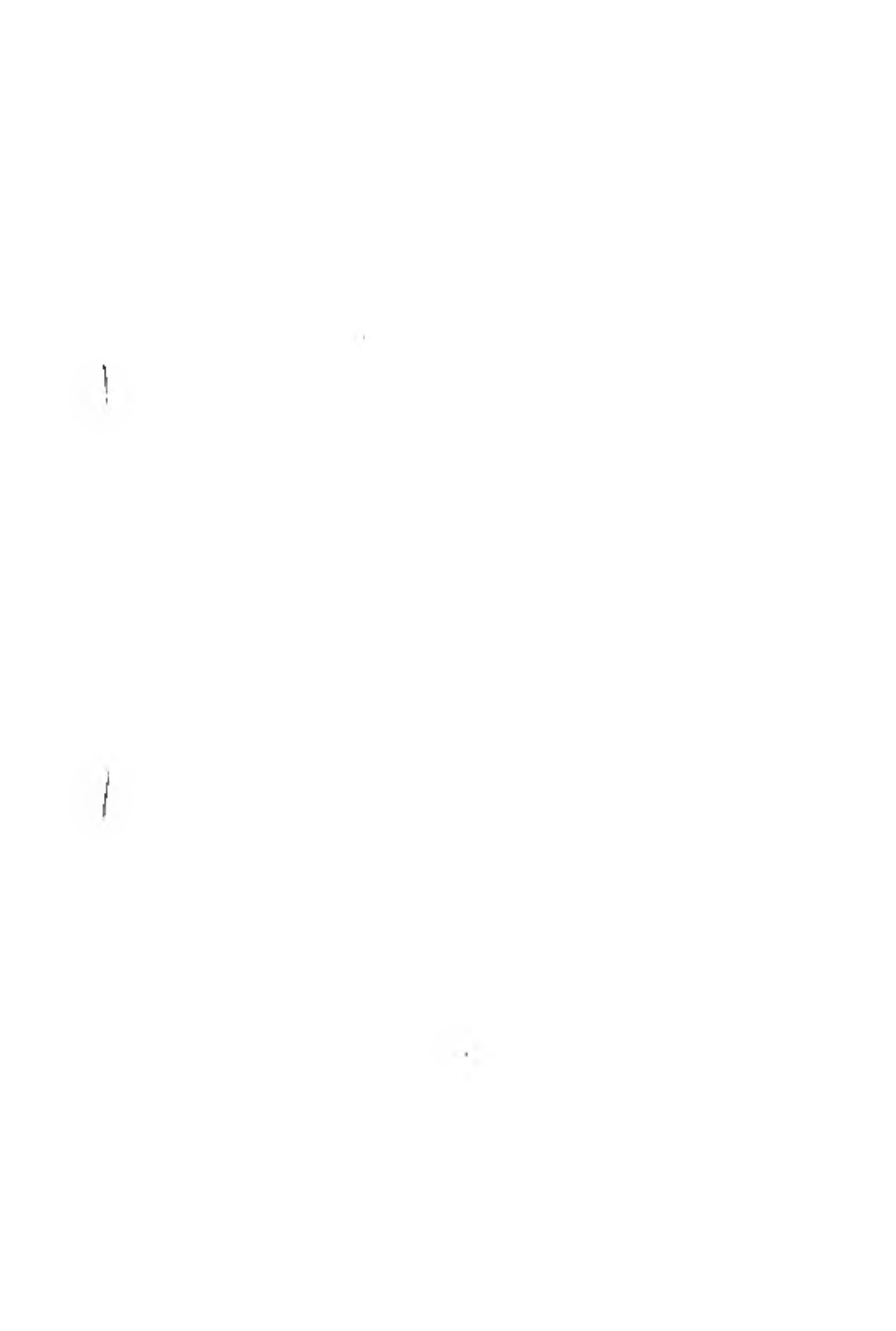
Not these for us, our aim is so to write
That common-sense approves our modest flight,
And rather one sound truth well understood
Than fifty beauties, warped and misconstrued.

Howe'er, to end this uncongenial task,
The muse removes grim Satire's hated mask,
And weary of the subject, theme and style,
Re-reads her couplets with a pitying smile -
Example apt for analysts abstruse,
And caustic scribblers vomiting abuse.

Ye gentle gentlemen of shoreless brains,
Spare her, I pray, your intellectual pains,
What you may scrawl we neither know nor care,
Nor wit, nor hate can deepen our despair,
And were it fitting with our theme and verse,
We well might end with a misanthrope's curse,
But that we would not have omniscience find
An acrid Timon, hating all mankind.

Thank heaven, there yet are realms this side of Styx
Void of base commerce and vile politics,
And grafting parasites with bloodless veins,
And vicious laws and prostituted brains
There still are hearts contained in human form
With modest honesty and virtue warm,
And elemental men resembling God,
Unlike the modern polished, bloodless fraud
Hearts quick to startle at their fellows' grief,
Nor fly lest poverty should need relief,
Glad to bestow a portion of their wealth,
And find a joy in charitable stealth,
Nor seek, like sharpers of commercial fame,
By pompous gifts to immortalize their name

To you, redeemers of a vicious age,
The poet dedicates his closing page,
Assured there still remains of honest worth
Enough to renovate our part of earth
Sufficient sanity, and hate of fraud,
To prove our right to our Dominion broad.
'Tis not for us to rant of cults and flags,
And trap ourselves in regimental rags,
We're here to thrive and cultivate the soil,
And reap the recompense of honest toil,
To grow in manhood cleanliness and peace,
Our virtue warrant of perpetual lease,
Prepared against the world to make it good
With our last dollar and last drop of blood



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Stewart, Alexander Charle

Dust and ashes (chiefly).

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